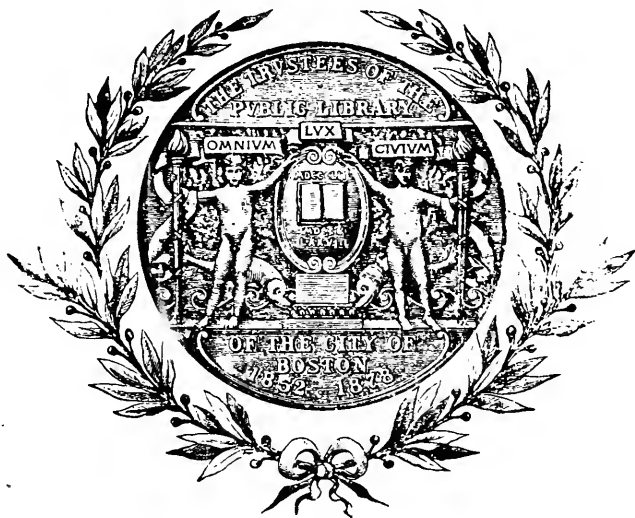




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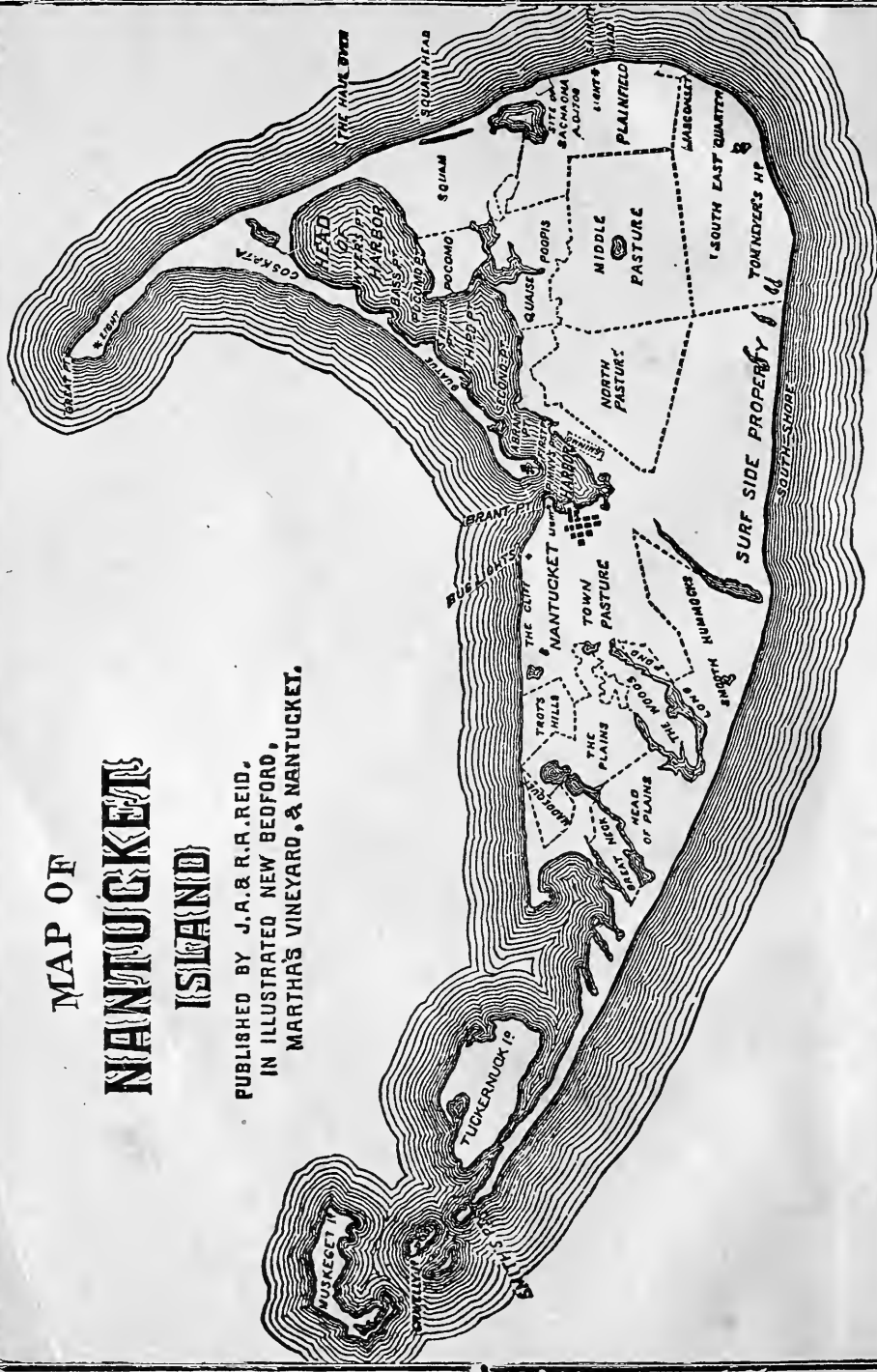
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# MAP OF NANTUCKET ISLAND

PUBLISHED BY J.A. & R.R. REID,  
IN ILLUSTRATED NEW BEDFORD,  
MARTHA'S VINEYARD, & NANTUCKET.





THE  
HEART OF SIASCONSET.

BY

REV. PHEBE A. HANAFORD,

AUTHOR OF

"DAUGHTERS OF AMERICA, OR WOMEN OF THE CENTURY," LIVES OF  
PEABODY, LINCOLN AND DICKENS, "FROM SHORE TO SHORE  
AND OTHER POEMS," THE SOLDIER'S DAUGHTER," "THE  
CAPTIVE BOY IN TERRA DEL FUEGO," "FIELD,  
GUNBOAT, HOSPITAL AND PRISON," LUCRETIA  
THE QUAKERESS, ETC., ETC., ETC.



The isles shall wait for His law.—Isa. xlii: 4.

Attuned to praise be every voice,  
Let not one heart be sad,  
Jehovah reigns! Let earth rejoice,  
Let all the isles be glad!—M. RAYNER.



New Haven, Conn.:

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1890.



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*Novanglica*

*Estate of Lucy A. Fisher*  
*Sept. 13, 1960*

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TO

Mrs. Fanny C. W. Hartley,

OF

NEW YORK,

A LINEAL DESCENDANT

OF

PETER FOLGER, TRISTRAM COFFIN, THOMAS MACY,

AND OTHERS OF THE

NOTABLE EARLY SETTLERS OF NANTUCKET,

AND IN WHOM

THE TRAITS OF CHARACTER SURVIVE, IN THE EVOLUTION OF A LIFE

DEVOTED TO USEFULNESS, THE ENJOYMENT OF LITERARY

TASTES AND THE HONORABLE ACTIVITIES OF SUCH

A HOME-MAKER AS WOULD REJOICE THE

HEART OF SIASCONSET,

THIS VOLUME IS

RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

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## P R E F A C E .

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**T**HIS book is for all those who love Nantucket, and especially for those who enjoy 'Sconset. Its local coloring is high, for it could not be otherwise. Personal allusions are unavoidable in such a book, though it may bring the charge of egotism also to the author. But if the little, sketchy volume shall convey any historical or genealogical knowledge to any reader, and especially if it shall contribute to the happiness of any invalid—thereby helping toward health—I shall be glad that I yielded to the wishes of dear friends, and put pen to paper, in depicting 'Sconset as it is, and the heart of 'Sconset as it always was, and, I hope, always will be.

I am pleased to dedicate it to one who prizes her Nantucket ancestry, though not of island birth herself, and who enjoys those 'Sconset characteristics which are promotive of health, and comfort, and peace.

The illustrations are not numerous, but they are, in my view, valuable. Sancoty has never been better shown, in any engraving, and I am grateful to Harper & Bros. for such a representation of the lighthouse as it was when the "N. M." visited it with the two sisters.

The picture of 'Sconset bluff and beach is all the more valuable to me, because photographed, probably, when my now deceased father was gazing on the ocean through his spy-glass.

The map is valuable as showing the shape of the Island, and the locality of 'Sconset thereupon. From the firm of J. A. & R. A. Reed of Providence were obtained for this book the map and the 'Sconset picture, and I have gladly availed myself of these illustrations, feeling sure they enhance the value, though they do not increase the price, of

“THE HEART OF SIASCONSET.”

(The title was original with “Helen.”)

Hoping that many of my friends, far and near, will enjoy this descriptive narration of life “on 'Sconset Bank,” and “strangers” will be led by it to find health and comfort upon this historic island,

“I launch my venture on an untried sea.”

THE AUTHOR.

539 Howard Avenue,

NEW HAVEN, CONN.



## ❧ HEART OF SIASCONSET. ❧



### CHAPTER I.

#### REST FOR THE WEARY.

“But come to that island each brother in feeling,  
And ye who can call it your birthplace and home;  
Away from vexation and vanity stealing  
To purity, peace and simplicity come.”

HENRY GLOVER.

“COME away from the bustle and heat of the city, will you?” exclaimed Helen to her sister, Jean. “You are weary with your long years of teaching and you need a restful change.”

“No doubt of that, sister,” was the reply, “but where shall I go? I have tried Niagara and the White Mountains and Europe. They all refreshed me for a

season, but the old weariness came back again when I breathed the air of the school-room once more."

"But go where the air is full of ozone—go to the seashore!"

"Haven't I been to the seashore! Surely you don't forget our Boothbay enjoyments, and don't you remember Magnolia and its delights?"

"Oh, yes, Jean, but there is one place you have not visited—one place you have not turned. They say it is unique and fascinating in its very strangeness. They say there is fresh air and pure water, good food and the best society; besides amber sunsets and glorious moon-rises over the ocean, and surf-bathing, and shell-gathering and—for you who love botany so well—plenty of wild flowers, and simplicity of living, and quaint houses and honest people, and——

"And,—and,—and—why, my dear, who told you all this, and where is the wonderful place?"

"Don't laugh, Jean, I've been reading 'Sconset Cottage Life,' by a wide-awake Syracuse lawyer, who loves the woods and the fields and the sea, as well as you do, and his book has a wonderful charm for weary people, I've heard say. At any rate, it has charmed me, and I want you to say you'll go to Nantucket Island and rest awhile. I'll do all the packing, attend to all the details,



and you shall have no care and no trouble. Only say you'll go, for I am sure it will do you a world of good."

"Well, Helen," said the invalid—for she was something of an invalid, albeit she ignored the title, and had not failed to perform faithfully her duties in the school-room; but the languid step and the heavy eye told of the wear and tear of the nerves that, after sleepless nights of pain, had been rasped and worn by the countless and unavoidable jars of the school-room. She loved her work as a teacher, she was beloved by the children in her charge, she was a trusted friend of their parents, and a favorite with the school-board; but the more than a quarter of a century of steady, faithful effort had done its work upon the physical powers that were not deathless, and there was need of rest and recuperation, or the school-room would have to be forsaken, and to the noble work of the teacher she must say "good-bye" forever. There had been intervals in her school-work—interregnums that were filled with work in the hospitals, when our wounded soldier boys watched her coming as that of an angel, when she wrote for them, read to them, sang for them, prayed with them,—and sometimes closed their eyes for the last, long slumber, and then wrote the sad letter to the home friends, which told them of an accepted sacrifice and a returnless path. She never for-

got to speak of the mansions in the Father's house, and the dear Christ who had welcomed their noble boys to the home He had gone to prepare. And so her name was embalmed in many hearts. She had given one year also to the schools of the South, and in that city where the Libby prison had been the awful doom of many a brave soldier boy—she taught, in the first year of peace, the earliest public school for white children. And the children of rebellious men became her loyal supporters, for “the law of kindness dwelt upon her lips,” and while abhorring treason, she never ceased to love and care for the traitor's little ones as faithfully as she cared for those whose fathers enlisted under the flag her own loyal brothers were enlisted under, and for whose safety and honor one of those dear brothers died. So, far and near, this Massachusetts teacher had a host of friends, but none of them could stay the progress of disease, possibly, as some thought, induced, amid the self-denying labors of the hospital, fostered by a continuance of residence in an enervating climate with wearying school labors, and fastened by a month in the Log Cabin on Centennial Grounds, where she helped to make memorable and enjoyable the visits of thousands to that structure, whose appearance and furniture was a historic delight, charming the antiquarian, and instructing the

foreigner who had just begun to learn of the Mayflower and her pilgrims, of Miles Standish and his victories, of Concord, Lexington and Bunker Hill. Now she was worn and weak and weary. Pain had become a continual presence, and sleeplessness intensified pain. So the energetic, warm-hearted Helen longed to try some new remedy, and delightedly urged a trial of 'Sconset cottage life, and waited only till the words, "Well, Helen," were succeeded by a look which signified "the question is settled; do as you think best."

It did not take Helen long to pack that trunk. Sister Beth, whom they visited before leaving—the good farmer's wife, and the farmer's good wife—soon had lunch ready, the ruddy, whole-souled nephews of the farm harnessed the strong horses, the handsome nieces kissed the departing aunts, Tip barked, Gyp struggled to get out of detaining arms to follow her mistress, but was reluctantly left, and soon they were on their way to Boston. In the Old Colony Depot a sweet-faced lady waited to bid them "Good-bye," and placed parting gifts of books and fruits in the dear invalid's hands. Other loved friends were there to say "farewell"—some of "Christ's little lambs" were there also, one tearfully wishing she could go to Nantucket with them, and cheered with the promise that she should follow them

soon; and one was there who claimed the far-famed island as her birthplace, and was about to make her annual visit to the Mecca of her heart. The hour came—the cry of “All aboard” was heard and they moved out of the depot and toward the rest and peace and refreshment of ocean breezes and sunny skies and pleasant homes and warm and happy hearts.

A few hours of comfortable car-riding—not over warm, nor very dusty; through stretches of farming country—through pine groves—through busy little towns, and catching delightful glimpses toward the end of the journey of blue waters and sandy beaches, of rocking boats and snowy sails—and then they landed upon the wharf, waited a short season in the depot, secured a nice cup of coffee, and conversed with the pleasant faced young woman who manipulated the telegraphic keys with great success, and then a cry rose—“There she is, there comes the ‘River Queen’!” The uninitiated looked in various directions. The older travellers saw the smoke-stack moving apparently over the land not far away, and in a few moments the people from New Bedford were landing at Wood’s Holl, the passengers for Oak Bluffs and Nantucket thronged the plank in their stead, the trunks were hastily wheeled on board, with the usual amount of shouting and screaming, of warning and command.


At last, the plank was drawn in, but in a half hour, more or less, it was out again; the larger number of passengers scattered themselves in the hotels and cottages of Oak Bluffs, and then the seekers after real rest and solid comfort steamed away for the historic island.

## CHAPTER II.

## LAND HO !

“Oh, know ye that Isle ? ’Tis the isle of my fathers,  
The island that gave my first breathings to me ;  
And still, through long absence, far memory gathers  
Its brightest and best from that Isle of the Sea.”

HENRY GLOVER.

N and on we steamed. The blue waters rolled beneath us. The white sea-gulls screamed, and soared, and wheeled, and dipped around us. Here was a buoy to mark a shoal; there a black, low, freight-laden propeller, yonder a yacht with snowy sails, farther off a topsail schooner; low on the horizon a brig with all sails set, and close aboard, soon, a fishing smack. Then we descried a light-boat riding the waves with her lantern hung amidships on the mast, while the faithful crew were some of them sleeping, in needful preparation for their vigilant night watches. The exhilarating sea-breeze dropped to a calm—a light fog arose—it grew more dense—the eager eyes that scanned the horizon

for the first outline of the beloved island were disappointed. Not this time were they to see that, which to them was more beautiful than Venus, rising out of the sea. But the fog lifted, or the steamboat pushed steadily through and out of its enveloping folds, and there was the old island; far off to the left the white tower of the light-house at Great Point; on the right the little island of Tuckernuck, named by the Indians, from its shape, that of a loaf of bread. In front, the water-tank on its stilts—the Cliff, with its ancient houses and modern cottages, the Jetty, stretching its stony length towards the channel—the bell buoy—Brant Point light—and soon the town of Nantucket rising in its amphitheatrical dignity—so often mentioned by travellers—full before our eyes.

We drew nearer and more near. There was the crowd upon the wharf. There were the carriages, public and private—but the place where the boat would land its passengers was well enclosed. No pushing and crowding near the plank, but such a volley from the farther off eyes of hundreds! We stand upon the upper deck. A hand is waving! There waves a handkerchief! We cannot tell, as we slowly take our place at the wharf, whose hand it is, or whether the token is for us or for another. But “there’s George!” shouts one of our

party. "There's the wagon!" screams another, "yes, and Rollie!" And they all go below, and go ashore, and such a getting into all sorts of vehicles, and so many pleasant greetings, and such warnings to "wrap up, if you are going to 'Sconset to-night, for its growing thick again!" "Only a sea-fog!" says the quiet brother, with a suggestion as to how heavy-weights should be stowed in such a wagon as he had brought—large, roomy, easy, and with secured seats, but with no covering; therefore the umbrellas were placed so as to be handy. The crowd had been disintegrating while our party was finding baggage and hoisting themselves—Helen right over the wheel—into the commodious vehicle, and the wagon, as it rattled off the wharf and over the cobble stones, passed pedestrians of every size, while the occupants noticed that door-steps and windows were thronged with people who gazed on the new-comers ready to return the salute of friendship or the greeting of good-will. Along Federal Street, where "the Athenæum" was pointed out with commendable pride by the natives to the visitors in the wagon, and across and up Main Street to Orange, where the town clock in the venerable church is mentioned as the generous gift of a successful son of Nantucket, who also gilded the dome of his childhood's Sabbath home, down Orange Street,



past "the Block" where the earnest woman pastor resides, past the "Sherburne House" and the "Bay View," and other hotels and boarding houses which are seen and mentioned, with scraps of their early history thrown in, and the owners of the long ago remembered with a sigh or smile—with a loving hand-shake from kindred who rush from their door for a moment to the wagon—on to "Newtown gate," (no gate at all), crossing the railroad track (!!) looking at the comfortable Almshouse, peering along the road to see if other carriages are bound 'Sconsetward, and then the night and the fog settles down, waterproofs and umbrellas come into use, and the horse jogs along in the rut; conversation flags, and the wish comes that the cars, instead of going only to the South Shore as they did then, could land the weary passengers from the boat, in a short hour at 'Sconset. By-and-by they came to a sort of parting of the roads—at least to a sandy space from whence many rutted roads proceed. "Which will you take, George?" is the inquiry. "Oh!" said the driver, who was farmer, ex-mariner, fisherman and brother all in one, besides being a husband and the father of six likely children—"It doesn't matter, for whichever road you choose you'll wish you had taken the other," and they jogged on. The sandy road and the heavy cargo were not promotive of great speed, so the fog

had ample opportunity to sift itself in and around the invalid, and awakened the ever-vigilant Helen to a fear that the rheumatism might be augmented, or the misty-moisty voyage in the wagon across the curtained plains, result in pulmonary dangers. "No fear of the fog!" persisted the cheery driver, bound to look on the bright side. "People never get cold in a sea-fog!" But the fog changed to a drizzling rain—at least a trifle worse than a Scotch mist. Then it lifted a little. Far off was seen the flash of Sancoty, and then arose a conversation upon the merits of that wonderful Fresnel Light, which could be seen, in clear nights, for twenty miles at sea, and warned off many a mariner from the dangerous South Shoals.

All at once a smell—an odor—a fragrance! Quick senses discern quickly, and one at least of the travellers was on the alert. "Swamp flowers! I guess"—said one, "Swamp pinks!" said the driver, "Swamp azaleas!" exclaimed Helen, with an irrepressible "Oh, I must have some! I must have some!" The good natured driver said "Whoa!" kindly dismounted, then following the scent, he gathered from the swampy roadside the fragrant blossoms of the "*clethra*" and a few scattered specimens of the wild azalea.

"There's health in the very aroma of the wild flowers

here!" said Helen, and she eagerly placed them in her sister's hands, and then she told her how from early spring to the coming of snow-flakes there are flowers along those Nantucket swamps and all over the plains. The trailing arbutus sends abroad its delicious fragrance with the coming of the blue birds, and the golden-rod and aster display their beauty in the shortened sunbeams of the dying year. The moisture of the atmosphere, as in the British Isles, is conducive to the brilliant coloring of the flowers, and yellower buttercups or more golden dandelions are nowhere to be found. The little *housatonia* whitens the roadsides at one time, and later the *Hudsonia* gilds the plains, then the purple *gerardia*, the yellow aster, the pink *polygala*, the Indian bean, the sickle-leaved *inula*—each in its own season—appear. On the margin of some of the little ponds grows the lovely, starry, pink *sabbatia*; and Nantucket botanists pride themselves on saying that the veritable *erica cineria* (with other heather plants) the real Scotch heather, is to be found in a few secluded and unnamed spots, which, on the authority of Prof. Gray, they declare grows in no other place throughout the length and breadth of these United States—perhaps, I should say, not in all America.

Conversing of these flowers (the natives, it must be

confessed, boasting a little) the travellers proceeded. The village was reached at last. Its windows could be seen, for the cheerful light shone from within.

“There swings Robert’s lantern!” exclaimed one.

“And there’s Aunt Sophy’s big lantern!” said another.

But the lanterns were all forgotten—for there was the new Chapel, just built, picturesque for that inartistic village—all lighted up, the colored lights of its window in front, filling the whole street and village with a sense of the æsthetic, and packed from the platform to the doorsteps with ’Sconset folks—natives and visitors—to listen to the pathos and humor of the sweet-faced elocutionist, (rejoicing in the Coffin name and blood) and to be uplifted by the vocal and instrumental music of that welcomed hour. ’Sconset at last had an audience room large enough for the many, if not for all. And the little chapel which was hardly finished, and not yet furnished and dedicated, was utilized at once to earn its musical instrument, and give the exalted satisfaction of an intellectual and artistic treat to those who had not forgotten the opera or the theatre, though daily listening to the voice and music of that mighty ocean,

“Which rolls the wild, profound eternal bass  
In Nature’s anthem, and makes music  
Which can please the ear of God.”

The wagon passed on, and soon it stopped before a little, weather-worn cottage, full of sweet and sacred memories to many hearts, and there a welcome and supper had been waiting long. They gladly accepted both; then one of them found her way to the chapel for the sake of the dear faces to be seen as well as for the entertainment. The latter was almost over, but the full quarter's worth of joy and more was had in the friendly greetings, and the great satisfaction, that at last the long desired goal was reached, and one of the things dear to the heart of Siasconset was attained.

Long after the chapel lights were out, and the audience scattered, the little cottage was full of activity. The invalid chose to occupy "the sky parlor," and found the few stairs of the lowly dwelling not very hard to climb. Carefully walking somewhat near the center of the two bedrooms nearest the ridge-pole, heads were safe from contact with the beams, darkened with age, but swept neatly from cobwebs and their occupants. The air, though moist, was not unrefreshing, nor disagreeable. No mosquitoes sang a requiem at the death of comfort, nor danced their provoking war-dances in our very faces.

The weary ones laid their heads upon their pillows. There was a murmur of prayer, and that was succeeded

by the murmuring of the waves, heard in the stillness of the night, and never ceasing, rising and falling, as the breakers gathered and broke, and gathered yet again. All night long the light-house fire blazed, and flashed and blazed again, and all night long, while the fog lifted and the stars came out, and the soft breeze stirred the white curtains in the little cottage, and the sleepers rested, sounded far and near the solemn roaring of the mighty sea.

## CHAPTER III.

## SURROUNDINGS IN THE COTTAGE.

“But the stranger there finds, in each humble dwelling,  
Kind brotherly greeting, hearts open and free;  
And prayers for the humble far upwards are swelling  
From each lonely shrine in that Isle of the Sea.”

HENRY GLOVER.

**M**ORNING came with the glory of sunshine, and the inmates of the little cottage were early astir. Vacation hours seemed too precious to be spent in sleep, though very often, sleep is the best medicine for the weary body and the overtasked mind.

“What will you do first?” exclaimed Jean, after breakfast was over, and the determined look on the otherwise pleasant countenance of the active Helen, was supplemented by the emphatic answer—“Do! the trunks are to be emptied, in part, at least, and we are to get settled.”

“Getting settled” meant much locomotion, many words, and not a few audible smiles.

“Do give me the attic chamber, Helen,” was the appeal of the invalid sister. “It is airy, by reason of the good draught, if it is not so very lofty, and its very quaintness, and being so much the opposite of what I have at home, is attractive to me.”

“Oh! yes, Jean, you shall have your way. Under the roof here at 'Sconset, does not mean the excessive heat and discomfort of a garret in other places. Pure air and plenty of it—heat tempered by the proximity of the ocean—that's what 'Sconset means! Besides, if you want to bathe in the ocean water, while you are yet too lame to go into the surf, you can be retired enough and yet warm enough to have your fresh pail of water every day brought to you, and bathe in your chamber.”

“*Fresh* pail of *salt* water, Helen! How that sounds! But never mind, if I only get the water with sufficient saline and other qualities to make me well again. This state of invalidism is foreign to my taste, as well as custom, and I long for the buoyant health I have enjoyed most of my life.”

“Well, Nantucket is said to be a place of recuperation. If health can be regained anywhere, it can here. The old residents, you see, are healthy enough, and they live to great age here, with a vigor of mind and body that makes life desirable.”



“Yes, but who knows whether it is the hygienic qualities of the ozone atmosphere, and the purity of the water, and the restful character of the social life, which moves with an unruffled flow, or whether it is the inherited longevity of men and women whose ancestors were possessed of more than common physical stamina, and lived very clean and therefore healthy lives.”

“What’s the use of reasoning over the matter”! spoke up the Native Member of the party, “just do the best you can. Here’s Father Coffin, hale and hearty for a man almost four score; and Captain Baxter, whom you’ll see pretty soon, a younger man at eighty than some men of forty—and his wife’s uncle, that you will see moving about the bank, in the dignity of venerable age and a worthy record, almost ninety, yet able to converse as intelligently as ever, his memory scarcely failing, and his remarkable powers of mind so evident that one has no reason to wonder why his daughters are such superior teachers. I tell you, Capt. Swain is a specimen for a Nantucketer to be proud of, and all you have to do, is to enjoy seeing such encouraging instances of health and long life, and make up your mind that Sconset will build you up again, and give you another lease of life and health.”

So they talked on till “Jean! Jean!” was the cry of

the stirring member, Helen, who had rushed away while the N. M. was talking, "you'd better stop arguing the question, and come up here, and see what I've done, while you've been talking. 'Save your breath to cool your porridge.' Come up here!"

They ascended. This 'Sconset cottage rejoiced in a flight of real stairs, and at the top was a door opening into a comfortable chamber, with sloping roofs, but lathed and ready for plastering. The laths however were nailed there long years before—and more than two decades of 'Sconset air and wear had browned them almost to the color of mahogany. In the room was a bedstead with one of the most comfortable of beds upon it, and Helen had it invitingly prepared already for the second night. An ancient, oaken desk, with sloping top, stood in a niche under the roof, and nearer the door stood a mahogany bureau, both of these historic in that household, and therefore highly prized, though bearing the evidence of much use and great age. Over the bureau was a mirror, with carved, mahogany frame. From one lower corner a piece of the glass had been broken, but Helen had covered up the vacant space, and gratified her æsthetic proclivities by placing a bunch of artificial roses in the corner.

Across a little passage way, which led to the attic

over the back part of the cottage, they stepped, doors opened from each chamber into the passage, which could be closed for privacy or opened for the fresh, cool breeze from the wide ocean, glimpses of which could be seen from the two eastern windows. This western chamber was the special retreat of the invalid, for repose and refreshment. Two bedsteads were here—one of them the well-known cot bedstead with sacking bottom, so common in many homes on the island for use on extra occasions, because easily borne from place to place. The nurse occupied it nights, and the infant day-times, on those memorable occasions when the mother had gone down to the gates of the grave after the children who were to make glad the hearth and home in coming years;—and not infrequently it was the last resting place of the beloved but forsaken forms which awaited the final transfer to the burial casket, in the sacred and solemn repose of a nobly finished work and a peacefully ended life. White curtains, small and plain, were at the windows. Helen had found two old cloaks, of camel and bombazine, and stretched them along the wall “for tapestry”—as she said;—a small, old table which she had discovered out in the yard with the grass growing up and around its worm-eaten legs, was utilized—covered by a snowy towel with a scarlet, embroidered

end—back of it against the dark beams and laths, was the top of a cherry table—inlaid—and on it a glass tumbler of sweet and showy flowers. There was the clethra for fragrance, the red field lily for color, the sunflower for æsthetic significance. And sunflowers were to be had for the gathering—since in the little vegetable garden near the cottage, the boy-farmers who called these 'Sconset visitors “Aunties,” had planted sunflowers enough to gladden, with their black and shiny seeds, the winter days of the flock of hens the busy boys were cherishing as chickens through the Summer hours. In their golden glory the sunflowers towered and nodded, and were of all sizes and various stages of advancement, bloom and ripeness.

“*Helianthus annuus!*” exclaimed Jean, “I welcome you to my boudoir!”

“Oscar would be delighted to see your flowers, Jean,” laughed Helen.

“But,” said the N. M. thoughtfully, for somehow the jokes always grew to be matter-of-fact with her, “the sunflower ought to be cultivated more than it is. Valuable to the farmer by its seeds which the fowl so greedily appropriate, it is yet more valuable as a rapid grower in malarial districts. Its leaves are like the Scripture ones—‘for the healing of the nations.’ All

our cities need improvement societies to insist upon sunflowers in every back-yard, lane and alley."

"Do make yourself a committee of one," said Helen, "to spread abroad the virtues of the sunflower. Perhaps Oscar Wilde would like a partnership engagement. You do the practical part and he the posturing and æsthetic."

"Farewell to Oscar!" was the reply of the Native Member, "and farewell to both of you. I'm going down to take my things out of my trunk, and make the little front parlor into a study. When you are ready, Jean, my nephew will call in to talk with you about German lessons, and while you are teaching him to say '*Guten Morgen!*' I'll begin on your copy of Carlyle."

She tripped away, but Helen called after her, "Don't be poking over a book all the time, while you are at 'Sconset. You read enough at home. Take out your photographs of the children and grandchildren, and other celebrities, if there are any equal to those grandchildren, and put them up around the table and on the mantel. Make yourself useful, for once."

The N. M. laughed, and declaring there was freedom at 'Sconset, nevertheless obeyed. Soon the trio were at work, and lo! a transformation scene, equal to the one just enacted overhead. Sunlight invaded the premises, always scrupulously clean, but always kept free from dust

by the closing of all apertures, and with the lowered muslin and outside paper curtains kept generally darkened. Away up to the top went the outside curtains, half way up the white ones, then the window was opened, the table placed in front, (its green cloth covered with a white towel) for ink, and pens, and paper, and postal cards, and all the paraphernalia of a study-table; rows of books were placed there also; in the corner a rocking-chair for Jean; a corner sacred to the invalid henceforth—and the work was done. On the mantel in front of the plain, old-time looking-glass, stood the framed pictures of the little ones, the great-grandchildren of the owner of the cottage, and on the walls were tacked innumerable photographs of distant friends, more or less distinguished in the world of letters or in society.

“Why the little room is a gem!” exclaimed Jean, who evinced such a genuine satisfaction in all the efforts made for her comfort, that it was a pleasure to devise and execute plans with that end in view.

Forthwith she seated herself in her cosy corner, and her pen began to travel back and forth over one of those handy pieces of card-board the Government has wisely devised for saving time and fostering the expression of good will. And oh! the postals and letters that went forth from that cottage! Native and foreign mem-

bers of that household vied with each other in sending back to the Continent of America, and far away to Europe also, missives of remembrance and affection, never failing to declare that 'Sconset was a grand place for recuperation and rest, with neither fuss nor feathers, starch nor sentiment, to make life unbearable, and that they wished all their correspondents could breathe that air and drink that water, and share the freedom from conventionality, in the atmosphere of good-will, which was best and most healthful of all.

The neighbors had been in, a few of them, more came later in the week, but all expressed a desire that the weary ones should be refreshed, that the invalid should recover health, that the N. M. should enjoy her island birth-place—albeit eight miles away from the little street, now a garden, and the old-fashioned house, burned in the great fire of 1846, where she first saw the light. Godfrey erroneously calls her a native of 'Sconset, but, perhaps it matters little, for from the sands of Smith's Point to those of Great Point, from the Cliff to Sancoty and 'Sconset Bank, including the picturesque town upon her several hills, all is Nantucket Island, and the N. M. is proud to be known as a Nantucketer.

And pleasant were the seasons of literary communion

and converse in that little front room. There the trio used to sit with their books and pens when the housework was finished. The student-nephew would run in with some flower or shell about which he would have some question to ask or some fact to state. Voices could be heard from the bench in front of the little store, as the owner and his neighbors sat there on the bench under the awning, chatting of the lively work the carpenters were making along the bank, or telling old-time stories of whaling victories and fishermen's dangers. The pretentious "Grocery" on the Main Street had taken most of the custom from this little store, and left the gray-haired sea-captain plenty of leisure to fight his ocean battles over again with the new-comers who sometimes questioned saucily, to find that the seeming simplicity of the aged mariner was a match for their inquisitiveness. Sometimes a savory smell from the kitchen would creep in unasked and give evidence that Helen's activity was finding new outlet, evidence that was emphasized when, descrying old friends just returned from Europe, riding up to the house, she rushed to the door, and warmly welcomed them, crying aloud, "Come in! come in! I've got some jolly good gingerbread for you!" Didn't that white-haired, handsome gentleman and his elegant lady-wife prize that hearty home welcome!



And the Egyptologist and his literary life companion ate the gingerbread—"and gave thanks."

So, in the little bed-rooms, trim and neat, with old-fashioned but comfortable furniture; in the large sitting-room, where the family gathered as it grew larger; in the great, convenient kitchen, with its sink and pantry and pot-closets, its old desk and sizable stove, its rag-carpet and ancient chairs—as well as in the airy chambers and cosy study the 'Sconset visitors found comfort and rest.

Pleasant greetings from the dwellers in the village met them on every hand, and often a neighborly call was made by a cheery spirit which of itself served to energize the invalid and help her to feel that life was yet worth living.

How handsome she looked, with her regular features, specially fine eyes, and dark, wavy hair, sitting in the rocking-chair in her corner, wrapped in her scarlet robe, and ready with a kind word, or a sprightly repartee, or calling upon the others to pause while she read from her favorite Emerson and Carlyle! And well she realized the truth of what the former said in his essay on "Power."

"The first wealth is health. Sickness is poor-spirited, and cannot serve anyone; it must husband its resources

to live. But health or fullness answers its own ends, and has to spare, runs over, and inundates the neighborhoods and creeks of other men's necessities."

So she rejoiced in her surroundings as conducive to health, but most of all she rejoiced in the evidence that sympathy was an island commodity, and that invalidism touches not only the sands and surf but the homes, not only the hands but the hearts, of Siasconset.

## CHAPTER IV.

## SURF-BATHING.

“Again to thee, O surf-encircled strand,  
Enamored still my thoughts will turn ; once more,  
Dear Siasconset, by thy foam-clad shore,  
Leaving in thought this tree-encumbered land,  
How well I love to tread thy arid sand,  
And listen to thy waves’ sonorous roar !”

CHARLES F. BRIGGS.

**N**OW, sister Jean, you are going to the beach! What is the use of being so near the surf, and never seeing the bathers! Suppose you are not able to go in yourself, it will do you good to see other folks tumble about in the water.”

Jean thought so too, and therefore Helen made all needful preparations. A shawl to spread on the sands, where the invalid might sit ; another to throw over her shoulders if the sea-breeze proved too cool, a basket for shells, if any were found, and a parasol to shield her from the sun’s rays if more shade was needed than her large-brimmed, shore hat would afford.

"Don't forget the opera-glass!" exclaimed the N. M., "I've been used to a spy-glass all my life—at least all my earlier days—and you'll find I'm right in saying this glass will help you to see the wonderful and the beautiful around you on the beach."

"And what's that under your left arm?" asked Helen. "I declare, it's a book! I might have known it was. I could have guessed with my eyes shut. Of course, you wouldn't be happy on that glorious beach without a book! I verily believe you'd want one if you were walking the golden streets, and you wouldn't be happy with the angels if they don't have libraries."

"Now, Helen!" remonstrated the N. M., "what do you care for! Why not let everybody be happy each in his own way!"

"Because, you precious simpleton—don't you know you need a change? Do let your eyes and your mind rest, for one week, at least!"

"La! never mind what Helen says!" cried the peace-making Jean, "you know she wants us all to be benefited by our 'Sconset sojourn. And for this once let's leave the book."

"O, I am no 'slave to the lamp,'" answered the N. M., "I can study and learn without a book, except Nature's Illuminated Volume, and Helen knows that is wide open

at 'Sconset. Come Helen, you dear careful-and-troubled-about-many-things-Helen! and don't forget your 'tent on the beach!'"

"'Tent on the Beach!' Whittier's? Why I thought she would not have us take a book. What does she mean by taking one herself?" asked Jean.

But the N. M. did not need to answer, for Helen, with characteristic gesture and the air of a *tragedienne*, whom she much resembled, shouted—" 'Infirm of purpose, give me the 'tent!'" and forthwith spread a large, light-colored umbrella with a green lining, and marched off in the direction of the beach. Very good service did that "tent" do, on the beach, and elsewhere during that summer sojourn by the sea. And its size and color helped one who was seeking its owner easily to find her, when the bathing spot was thronged with its hundreds of happy mermaids and their attendants.

Only a little distance, through the short, narrow, grass-lined paths, now dignified with the name of streets, henceforth—from 1883 on—to be immortalized in the diaries of those whose cottages are on them, and as the headings to their letters, whisked away by scores in Capt. Baxter's wagon every day. When only the villagers were at 'Sconset there was no need of anything to mark the places of residence, for everybody knew

where every other body lived, and it was enough to say, "Gone to Capt. Pitman's, or Uncle Alfred's, or William Owen's, or to *the* pump, or his boat-house," and at once the inquirer would know how to proceed to find the man he sought. But when "the strangers"—so-called—began to come, they lived one season in one cottage, and the next season in another, so finally, they named their cottages various fanciful names, and the original owners were lost sight of, in the fashionable nomenclature of the thronging visitors. Then the streets were named, and one day, when the N. M. and her friends were returning from the beach, they found white signboards with black lettering, informing them that henceforth the hotels were on Main Street. They had crossed Broadway, and their own domicile was on New Street, which, as it had been laid out forty years before, was rather a misnomer. But the new grows old always and everywhere. Thank God the old grows new again.

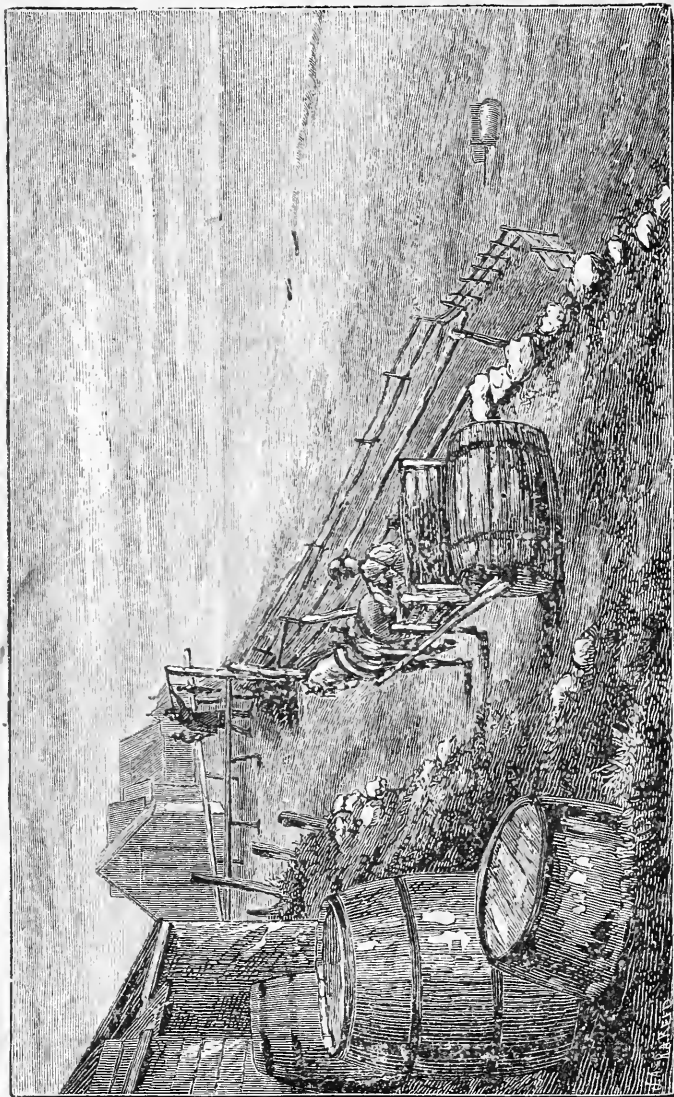
"But still the new transcends the old,  
In signs and tokens manifold ;"

and the thoughtful and trustful will not murmur,

"For all of good the Past has had  
Remains to make our own time glad,  
Our common, daily life divine,  
And every land a Palestine."

It was, therefore, no marvel that the trio, who went forth from the "Coffyn Cottage" on New Street, stood for a season, in rapt admiration, on the bank at the head of the curving path which sloped down to the sandy beach. The green grass lined that path, and the thistles in their purple splendor, with the showy stramonium, blossomed on the side toward the hill. But, before their feet could press the pebbly road, the wide ocean called for their attention, and every eye was bent upon the waves that flashed beneath the sunshine, then rolled and curved and broke in long, white lines upon the sandy shore.

It was the bathing hour. Soon the clocks in the little cottages would strike eleven. "Straggling down the bank," to use Mr. Northrop's graphic, if not elegant, phrase," came the bathers, men, women and children—in motley suits passing all description, fantastic and uncouth, neat and artistic, faded and forlorn, bright and gay, span new and clean, and mottled with clinging kelp—costumes baggy, short in the extremities, disguising beauty, and giving ugliness a new horror, dresses bewitching in the revelation of white arms and fair necks,—all sorts, indeed, and amazingly amusing to a fresh comer to 'Sconset. Down they came to the two or three chosen bathing grounds, where a stout rope



The Curving Path—page 41.



stretched over a support on shore extended out forty or fifty feet to a barrel which sustained it and beyond which it was finally anchored,—a contrivance which gave confidence and courage to the most timid.” All this, so well described in “Sconset Cottage Life”—the trio from “Coffyn Cottage” saw, and enjoyed. The novelty of it all, the breezy hill-top,—the winding, sloping path, stony and somewhat steep, to the sandy beach—the wide stretch of yielding sands over which a plank pathway led to the border of the surf-wet portion, the hammocks there swung under awnings, the busy, cheerful crowd, laughing at the mishaps of those who did not wish a wetting, and yet ventured too near the sweeping waters of the breaker which had combed and curved and broke upon the shore—the novelty of it all, and the exhilaration of it all—was magical to the invalid; and she had not long gazed upon the scene from the top of the bank, when she announced her intention of seeking the water-side, and but a short time elapsed before she was sitting on the out-spread shawl, half reclining, with her hands in the warm, clean beach-sand, exclaiming as it ran through her lifted fingers, “This is tonic indeed! This is surely Hygiea’s kingdom!”

Not far from the party sat a man who watched the bathers, ready at a moment to spring for a strangling

bather, upset in the frolicsome surf. Sturdy and sober and solemn, but his sharp eyes in every place at once, it seemed, and full of interest in new comers or old settlers, alike, if they were in the water, he seemed the guardian angel of the place. A roughly dressed angel, to be sure, without wings or sheen, but with a sailor's heart full of good-will towards the helpless, which would lead him to rescue the darling of some earthly home, (if the wild waters swept such a one away from the rope,) and thereby cause joy in the presence of the angels of home.

“Here comes Walter!” exclaimed a young girl near the invalid. Jean turned her head in the direction indicated, and saw a form clad in a bathing suit of blue, scant but sufficient, advancing toward the surf like a wheel. And into the water he wheeled—under the waves—out of sight; then rising he rode calmly on the surface, beyond the surf, as if the entering upon Neptune's domains in such a way had been the merest pastime, and was the customary and orderly method. “Look at Em.!” was the next exclamation, and lo! a *girl*, clad in bathing costume all hairy with sea-weed, advanced like a queen of the mermaids. One glance at her brother—one scream in a joyous tone, “Coming, Walter!” and as the great wave rose and began to bow

gracefully towards the spectators, Emily went through its green-glazed curtains; out of sight, the wave bowed low upon the sand with a roar of satisfaction, and the brave girl was at once seen, as the waters rolled up and then back, far out beyond the line of surf, floating, by turns, and swimming, beside her only brother. She had earned much commendation by just such acts of physical bravery and skill. There were not wanting those upon the beach who remembered a day when her body, limp and water-soaked, and with little evidence that it still held the immortal spark, was rescued, and borne to her home upon the bank. But as they told that story they told also the indomitable courage, and inflexible will which braved all the dangers again and again till the rightly formed purpose to be a swimmer was entirely fulfilled. The name she bore indicated that she might be of the "knowing Folgers," but the strong will of old Tristram Coffin had come down through her mother's ancestry, and no one could call her "lazy." As she swept the mighty waves with her small, but strong arms, the little lady seemed a very Undine—a goddess of the deep. She divided the honors of that queenly place, with others of the island blood, and noticeably with the handsome elocutionist who had charmed the hearers in the little chapel. Many a fair lady from other States

than the good old commonwealth the Pilgrims started, vied with the heroines of 'Sconset heritage and Nantucket name in displaying marvellous skill as swimmers, and won the rapturous or wondering applause of the on-looking crowd upon the beach. Beyond the breakers where the keg that marked the anchorage of the rope, bobbed and surged and curvetted, there was a motley gathering of men and boys; some climbed upon the keg, some held the rope, and rested, half-floating on the heaving surges; and farther north than the rope and its crowd, was seen one woman with a huge hat shading her face, and a tall, stalwart youth holding her by the hands, as she rose and fell amid the breakers that curled and swept around her. It was the wife of a well-known physician who had found large measure of health in visiting 'Sconset, and whose family, for many long years, made an annual and often prolonged visit to the village by the sea, till they came to be regarded as almost a necessary part of the village itself. Boy and "hobbledehoy" and man, one came till he laid aside the "Master" for "Mr." and supplemented that at last with "Dr.," having kept the favor of his boyhood's friends, through all the years of growth and consequent change.

At one point on the beach, not far from the bathers, a tall, young man was teaching his lady pupils to swim.

The fair-haired youth was a student, reaching out after useful and honorable manhood as a physician, and during his vacation weeks, earning in this way the means to continue his studies. A favorite with all, from his gentle ways, he had the good-will of the host who seek for rest upon the sea shore, because life at all other times is a struggle and an aspiration, which here seems realization and repose. Ambitious youth, clad in the mail of rectitude, does not fight the battles of the world without sympathy, both human and divine.

And now the bathers begin to feel that they have stayed their allotted time, whatever that may be, some a longer and some a shorter time, and they rush up across the beach to the fish-houses, or bath-houses, where they have left their dry clothing. Some of them have prepared for the water while in their cottage homes on the bank, in the village, and even at the hotel, and these wrap their wet selves in a water-proof, put rubbers on their wet and sandy feet, and start, at a brisk pace across the plank-road to their homes.

The trio remain, with others, awhile longer. There is coming and going for an hour or more. One o'clock is the hotel dining-hour, and by that time the bathers will have washed off in fresh water, arranged their toilet, and are ready for a hearty meal.

Meanwhile, the trio return to "Coffyn Cottage." The aged proprietor believes in noon dinners, and they are, happily, not much behind time. Then they eat with 'Sconset appetite, and fall at once into the 'Sconset habit of sleeping after dinner; the sleep of care-free children, it is so sweet and restful.

With what pleasure they all read over, at the sunset hour, the inimitable chapter on "Surf Bathing," in Northrop's charming *bro-chure*. The day had furnished them fine illustrations, which retentive memories held for future joy.

## CHAPTER V.

## SOCIAL LIFE AT 'SCONSET.

“Undecked, unlovely as thou art,  
A speck upon the world's great chart,  
Thou art our native spot :  
And true to nature, still we love,  
And by affection still we prove  
Thy faults can be forgot.”

MARY MITCHELL.

**T**HERE is no escaping one's own atmosphere. And the atmosphere of a true Nantucketer is eminently social. The fact that the early settlers of the island intermarried, and for many generations, could call each other “Cousin” so largely, has had its influence on the social life of the islanders. The hundred years and more of cousining and neighboring has led to a freedom of social communion, and a personal sympathy, and close companionship, which is very delightful to one born and brought up on that sea-girt isle. The tie is a strong one, and when a Nantucketer who has been dwelling year

after year among off-islanders returns to his native place, the cordial welcome is an immeasurable joy.

So it was, that when Helen ran in to the sitting-room, and cried; "A message for you, darling!" and the Native Member saw familiar handwriting and read a kind invitation to take dinner in one of the prettiest cottages, she exclaimed, "Oh, how glad I am! It is just like that hospitable Mrs. S——, she knows how much I shall enjoy meeting those old and valued friends."

The invitation included Helen and her sister; and was cordially received by all. That evening, however, the N. M. was on the sick list, and the invalid had a poor spell, so that the ever-active Helen, went from one to the other through the night, and by the time morning came, with its cares, Helen was worn out. And so it came to pass that the invalid and the N. M. having "recruited," went over to the cottage, and the faithful Helen, having sped the parting guests, sought the seclusion of the tapestried chamber and found rest in the "sleep that knits up the ravelled sleeve of care;" taking, also, her pleasure in the knowledge that while she took needful rest, the others were happy and in congenial society. There were two pastors and a pastor's wife, who were not natives, but all the others whom they met were not only of island birth, but of the very best



island blood. And the pastors? why, one of them was ministering to a Nantucket church, and the other was his predecessor in the same pulpit. The pastor with a wife was not a savage in nature, whatever he might be in name, an air of refinement was the accompaniment of his handsome features, and those who listened to his polished discourses, or conversed with him on varied topics, could not fail to mark the wide and generous culture which made him worthy of his scholarly fame among the island students. And his sweet wife was a worthy helpmeet. The other? He was a stalwart soldier of the cross, both physically and spiritually. He had exchanged the parish by the sea, for one among the granite hills, but as often as he returned to the island which he loved, he found a welcome worthy of the high place he had won in their hearts while he served so faithfully for years a people critical because cultured, but genial because the intellect had not been cultivated at the expense of the affections. That the said pastor reciprocated their interest in him, and shares their devoted attachment to the historic island, was made evident, if not before, at least when the widely known and ever-welcome "*Inquirer and Mirror*," published these words from a letter by Rev. J. B. Morrison.

"I love the old island and the mighty sea. It posses-

ses charms to be found nowhere else. What a people! What a history!" And to these words a rhythmic response was made through the press one day, by the writer of these pages, as follows:

"I love the dear island that rests on the wave,  
Whose fossils proclaim it as old as the days  
When the *ostera* dwelt where the blue waters lave  
The far foot of the hill where the beacon fires blaze.

O Sancoty! send thy bright flashes afar!  
Let the gleam of thy light cheer the mariner's heart!  
For the isle of Clan-Coffin shines forth like a star  
In the sky of our memories till life shall depart.

O island beloved, thy sands have a charm,  
Thy flora so fair and thy shells on the strand,  
Thy people at peace, far from city alarm,  
Thy breezes so healthful, while billows so grand

Roll in from the ocean, so mighty, so vast;  
Where thy sons were as kings in the proud days of yore,  
"Old Island!" I love thee—on thy breast at last  
Let me sink to the rest that shall cease nevermore.

"What a people" have come from the stalwart and true,  
Old England's fair children who purchased that strand!  
"What a history" they've written, in deeds, as they grew  
To a mighty host scattered in every land!

“Old Island!” God bless thee from Smith’s point to Great,  
From the Cliff to Surfside, and from ’Sconset to Town,  
May the “mighty sea” bear to thee, early and late,  
Thy children who joy in thy world-wide renown!

O people, whom God, from the first, set apart,  
Proudly humble, before Him in faithfulness toil,  
Till your history, graven on Liberty’s heart,  
Shall make hallowed ground of our dear native isle!

The hostess at the pretty cottage was a lady of literary taste and ability, whose ready pen wrote the appropriate farewell ode which was sung at the celebrated Re-union of the descendants of Tristram and Dionis Coffyn, in 1881, and as for the others of the party, were they not all of the same tastes, and sharers in the lofty sentiments and enlarged ideas which mark the *elite* of the island! It was a characteristic ’Sconset party—differing but in size from many others often held by the town’s people upon “’Sconset bank.”

The N. M. enjoyed the hearty welcome, and the kindly greetings best of all, for there was in them a flavor of school days, and childhood’s care-free joys which had been lacking in many a party she had attended among those perhaps equally brilliant and kindly, but, alas! “off-islanders.” How the N. M. pities those who cannot talk of the private schools once patronized upon

the island, and to whom the names of John Boadle and Alice Mitchell and Mary Russell and Sarah C. Easton are all unknown ! The invalid listens and marvels at the long-continued delight so evident in the recital of old-time frolics, and juvenile joys. But she learns before she has been at 'Sconset many days what every visitor perceives, that the memories of childhood on that island have a perennial charm, and that to those who trod the town pavements, or crossed the 'Sconset ruts, in early days, there is no place so dear as that island—fifteen miles by eight at most—in all the broad earth, and however far they may roam, the native Nantucketer always returns with zest to the narrow streets and rutted roads, and welcomes the roar of the surf at 'Sconset, and the sonorous music of the old South bell.

The 'Sconset air whetted the appetites, and the excellent food (for the Nantucket cookery is unsurpassed) soon disappeared when the pleasant party were called to the noon-tide meal. Then the "sweet converse" continued, a few trips were made to the bank for a look off over the waters that slept beneath the sun of that summer afternoon, and a listening to the low murmur of the "little surf," and then the time came when the party from town must depart. The carriages arrived, the hostess and her guests all came out of the little cottage,

the key was turned, farewells exchanged, and soon the party from town were *en route* toward the setting sun, and the invalid and the N. M. returned to Coffyn Cottage feeling that life had few greater joys than could be secured in those cottages by the sea, where the social life was clean and sweet, with lofty thoughts and unalloyed good-will.

That was not the only social gathering the N. M. and her associates enjoyed while inmates of Coffyn Cottage. Sometimes from town came whole families, bringing, as is the custom, food already cooked, and then in the cottage the harmless beverages were prepared, and the big tables placed side by side, and the dishes that were heirlooms, and some of them sacred with memories of those who will eat and drink from them no more, placed thereupon; the chairs drawn up; the arm-chair placed for the aged master of the house, and then the younger and the older of the company assembled, and hastened to appease the appetites which 'Sconset only and ever affords, the viands were soon distributed and disappeared. Fresh air and sunshine browned the cheeks, but gave a robust health to the merry youth, and the elder ones shared in all the outward blessings, and added the cherished memories and hallowed hopes which always assist in the preservation of that measure of health which is so much to be desired, on sea or shore.

There were social evenings at the ancient cottage, when the neighbors and relatives took an hour or so after dark, and ran in for a quiet talk. But the evenings were short, and after such long and busy days, the invalid was inclined to seek a bath and repose, while the others, especially the younger of the relatives, preferred to ramble over the bank, or down on the beach, or wait for the mail, out by Capt. Baxter's. But at last quiet was secured, no dogs barked, no horse cars rumbled, no musquito piped a roundelay; silence reigned, unbroken except by the low murmuring, or solemn roar, of the surf, while the stars looked down on the peaceful cottages, and there was no fear of burglars or incendiaries, to hinder the sweet, refreshing sleep so needed by the invalid, so welcome to the household, one and all.

And the heart of Siasconset—the kindly feeling—was perceived even in the silent hours, for the heads of Helen and the N. M. rested on soft pillows which in this time of full houses and extra needs had been kindly loaned to the N. M. by one of her girlhood's friends, and were fragrant as sweet, English clover with the memories of those far-off days when "thee" and "thy" were words familiar in both use and hearing, at the homes of each and in the hours of school. Surely Whittier could say—and it would be true—to Linda

and Sarah and to the N. M.—and their hearts would echo the words:—Your hearts, oh! trio of birthright members!—

“How widely soever you’ve strayed from the fold,  
Though your “thee” has grown “you,” and your drab,  
    blue and gold,  
To the old friendly speech and the garb’s sober form,  
Like the heart of Argyle to the tartan grow warm.

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*

Who scoffs at our birthright? the words of the seers,  
And the song of the bards in the twilight of years,  
All the foregleams of wisdom in santon and sage,  
In prophet and priest are our true heritage.  
And this green, favored island, so fresh and sea-blown,  
When she counts up the worthies her annals have known,  
Never waits for the pitiful gaugers of sect  
To measure her love, and mete out her respect.”

## CHAPTER VI.

## A CHAPEL RETROSPECT.

“Thou savedst me from the dangers of the sea,  
That I might bless thy name forevermore,  
Thy love and power the same will ever be  
Thy mercy is an inexhausted store.”

PELEG FOLGER.

**L**OOKING out of the window toward the little chapel one bright morning, the N. M. expressed, (as she was wont to do, being a little given to repetition in her expression of thought and emotion, perhaps owing to her profession, which countenances “line upon line, and precept upon precept,”) her great delight that the village had at last an edifice in which the devout heart of Siasconset might voice itself in prayer and praise.

Then the invalid asked concerning the generosity which linked the name of Horatio G. Brooks forever with the land upon which it stood, and the N. M., with the assistance of Helen—whose memory of details was



unparalleled—recounted the history of the various efforts in the direction of a place of worship ; how the Martins early encouraged the idea, and the village-folk and towns-people made various contributions to the sums at first subscribed, till at last, in 1882—the matter was brought to a pleasant climax by the presentation of the lot whereon the chapel now stands, and then followed its consecration.

The day previous was a memorable day upon 'Sconset beach. The surf was very high ; the mighty heaving of the surges appalled the bathers, except that a few of the more venturesome, thought it would be a good opportunity to try their powers as swimmers, and a few others, not realizing the vast force of the surging waters, imagined they could stand by the rope as usual, and no harm could come.

One of these latter bathers was a young girl from the capital of our nation—a teacher in one of the public schools at Washington. Along the banks of the Potomac there was no such surf, and she was all unused to the perils of the deep in such an hour. Holding fast to the rope, she rather enjoyed the fierce buffetings of the waves, and laughed merrily at the fears of the timid ones on shore. One gentleman alone was near her, and he was lame, and as an invalid, could do little for her

rescue, when suddenly a mighty wave swept her from her hold upon the rope, and tossed her helplessly along the turbid waters.

Not far from the rope, a clergyman, who believed in muscular Christianity, had been taking his daily "swim," but finding the exertion to be too near the nature of work to comport with his purpose of play in vacation, he had reached the shore, and was just going up the bank to his own cottage, when he heard the loud and repeated shrieks of those who from the shore and bank beheld the sad catastrophe, and saw the fair young girl swept away into the wild swirl of raging waters. His own wife—nobly forgetting to be selfish—called to him as a rescuer, and he, taking in at once the danger of the floating bather, and the necessity of swift assistance, turned and ran across the beach again to the water-side. Wildly the surf greeted him with hoarse voice of triumph, but he plunged in fearlessly—though not a little weary after his own hard swim, and hard run over the sands—and struck out for the dark object on the crest of the billow.

The young teacher had retained her presence of mind, as she was swept away from the rope, so that she placed herself in position to float, and until she fainted, as the rescuer reached her side, she had kept her face above the water. Then came the struggle.

Anxious eyes watched the brave and difficult feat of the rescuer. Almost exhausted, he yet swam with the maiden till he reached the rope, and there held himself, supporting her, till others came, and both were brought to the shore, the rescuer almost breathless, and so faint and spent that his wife began to fear that in telling him of the great need of his prowess, she had urged him on to his own death. The maiden was beyond all knowledge of events.

Upon a plank she was borne to the nearest cottage on the bank, the doors of which were thrown wide open in Christian hospitality and sympathy. The strong hands of stalwart men bore the imperilled bather to the bed, at once placed at her disposal, and then the heart of Siasconset was still further shown, as the women present began their labor of good-will. Removing the wet clothing, and wrapping her in hot blankets, with bottles of hot water at her feet, and then rubbing vigorously the limbs so chilled, the loving service of the women present was at last rewarded, when the patient opened her dark eyes, and in a weak, plaintive voice, looking earnestly into Helen's eyes (for Helen had rubbed her from the first so vigorously that the perspiration was rolling down her own cheeks) she asked—"Is this death?" "No, this is life," answered Helen, and ex-

pressed also her joy that the sufferer could speak. But the revived one looked from face to face. All faces expressed interest, but all were strangers. The answer had not satisfied her. Remembering dimly, as the last thing known, her exceeding peril, and the faint that followed, she seemed to think she had passed through the portal of the grave, and had now come to consciousness upon the other side. Therefore she spoke again.

“Am I dead? Have I died?”

And then one whose face was known to her stepped to her side, and assured her that she was still upon the earth, rescued from the wild waters, and would soon be well as ever again.

And then the request came from the pale sufferer, “Do not let my mother know of this!” for she would not have the news of the peril go to that dear, far off mother, till she could reach her in person and assure her that the peril was no more.

How the heart of Siasconset throbbed in sympathy with the thoughtful devotion of a loving daughter, and in admiration for the noble daring of the muscular under-shepherd who risked his own life to save the imperilled teacher!

This was on Tuesday morning.

The next evening was to see the setting apart of the

donated land to its sacred use, and on Wednesday forenoon, Helen and the N. M., with her brother George, rode over towards Tom Nevers, and there gathered materials for a wreath, which should be at once suggestive and beautiful as a simple but expressive offering to the brave rescuer. The heart of Siasconset spoke its praise and thanks in this, and when the evening came—but now the press can speak, and the invalid who had been listening to the story as thus far told, was then permitted to learn the rest, as Helen read the following account, published in the *Nantucket Inquirer and Mirror* of Saturday, September 9th, 1882:

“DEDICATION AND THANKSGIVING SERVICE AT  
SIASCONSET.”

“On Wednesday evening, August 30th, the residents and summer visitors of Siasconset, young and old, assembled on the plot of ground which has been donated by Horatio G. Brooks, Esq., of Dunkirk, N. Y., for the purpose of building thereupon a Union Chapel which shall be for the use of all denominations, and dedicated the land thus generously provided for that purpose. At the same time a service of thanksgiving was held in view of the rescue from watery graves of Miss Charlotte Garrison (a teacher in Washington, D.C.,) and Rev. Geo. D.

Johnson who went to her assistance and nobly perilled his own life in his successful effort.

“The hour for service was eight and a-half o’clock, and by the light of the moon, just past her full, and two reflectors placed upon the little organ, which had been brought from the school-room, and a lantern held by a friendly hand, the unseated audience united in their first service upon the now consecrated ground.

“Rev. Phebe A. Hanaford announced the hymn—‘Nearer my God to Thee,’ which was then sung by all, led by a choir composed of Mrs. Corey, Mrs. Johnson, Mr. Brooks, and others, Mrs. Ingalls presiding at the organ.

Prayer followed by Rev. Phebe A. Hanaford—a prayer of dedication, and an expression of thanksgiving for the fulfillment thus far of the cherished hopes of many in regard to a place of worship at Siasconset, and also an utterance of gratitude that the occasion was one free from the sorrow which was narrowly escaped, and full of the gladness which the remembrance of the unbroken circles could but give. At the close of this prayer, the hymn ‘Jesus, Lover of my Soul’ was sung. Mr. J. Ormond Wilson, superintendent of schools in Washington, D. C., then read the following:

“Miss Garrison desires to express publicly her grati-

tude for her rescue from death: first to God, then to the Rev. Dr. Johnson, who so nobly went to her rescue and brought her to land, and to the more than brave lady, his wife, who, entirely forgetful of herself, urged her husband forward in the face of death; then to the ladies who so ably and tenderly brought her back to consciousness and health; and particularly to Miss Tissington and Mrs. Burbank, without whose aid she would hardly have recovered; and finally, gratitude and acknowledgments go to the whole people of Siasconset, for their interest and many manifestations of regard and kindness."

Rev. Mrs. Hanaford then addressed the assembly. Referring to the matter for special thanksgiving which was in all hearts, she presented, with fitting language, a beautiful wreath formed of grasses and 'life-everlasting'—(emblems of the gospel Mr. Johnson is called to preach, and which he nobly exemplified by his heroic act,) to Mrs. Johnson for her husband, expressing the admiration of all for the union of self-sacrifice, which made the wife urge her husband to a service he was so ready to perform, both knowing that in that angry sea his life also would be imperilled. (The wreath was made by Miss Ellen E. Miles of Jersey City, to whom the credit of this pleasing episode in the service

belongs.) Mrs. Johnson gracefully received it, and at the close of Mrs. Hanaford's address responded with an audible 'Amen.'

"The speaker then went on to refer to the fact that all hearts were united in gratitude to those whose generosity had secured this piece of land for future use as the ground for a Union Chapel, and closed with the following lines, written by her for the occasion:

We dedicate to Him who is 'Our Father'—

The Friend and Father of each human soul—

This plot of ground whereon to-night we gather,

With glad emotions we can scarce control.

Rev'rent we bow, with but one common feeling

Of deep thanksgiving that those lives are spared,

So lately to our sympathies appealing,—

The one in peril,\* and the one who dared.†

Wildly the waves upon our white sands breaking,

May send abroad their ceaseless, solemn tones,

But we, the echoes of the heart awaking,

Sound our *Te Deum* for the rescued ones.

And when, in days to come, Thy children gather—

Of every name, in one dear Name made one,—

Within the temple here to stand, Our Father,

May praises rise in union as begun!

---

\* Miss Garrison, who was swept off by the surf.

† Rev. G. D. Johnson, who risked his own life to save a drowning stranger.



And thou, Great Helper! then, as now and ever,  
Give all the victory in each trying hour,  
Till safe, where no dividing waves may sever,  
They stand, death-freed, upon the heavenly shore.

“Rev. George D. Johnson of New Brighton, S. I., then read the *Te Deum* and several appropriate collects to which the proper responses were made, and the interesting services closed with singing of ‘All hail the power of Jesus’ name,’ and the benediction by Rev. Mr. Johnson.

“It will be seen that the first service on this ground was thus a union service, ministers of two denominations being present, and all hearts united in sentiments of thanksgiving and Christian fellowship and good-will.”

The invalid laid aside the newspaper article with the remark that she was not surprised at the satisfaction she so often heard expressed in reference to the Chapel, and thought that only Quakers, or those who like them had learned to worship everywhere, and on all days, could have endured so long the absence of a place in which to gather for outward expression of worship.

And the invalid was right.

## CHAPTER VII.

## CHATTING BY THE SEA.

“Thy charms, Siasconset, no one can describe,  
Or the pleasure we take as we thitherward ride;  
The calm, sunny wave and the deep, heaving sea,  
Are both emblematic, dear 'Sconset, of thee.”

LYDIA BARNEY.

“COME,” said the invalid, now as ready to seek the beach as any of the 'Sconset visitors, “isn't it most time for our little reading by the vast and lonely sea?” This expression “vast and lonely sea” had been heard so often from the same lips, in description, or in admiration, or as an exclamation, that not infrequently it provoked a smile, which she good-naturedly observed, and with an answering smile, as if repetition settled the value of the phrase, repeated it again. Ultimately it became only necessary to say “vast and lonely,” with a questioning or beseeching tone, and it was understood, hats and shawls or parasols secured, and the steps turned seaward.

So beside "the vast and lonely," the N. M. and the invalid were soon sitting, one reading aloud in "Ben Hur," that wondrously attractive first chapter where the three camels and their unique riders appear upon the lonely desert, the other listening with eyes fixed upon the wide and rolling main, but thoughts far away in the land where history was born.

By-and-by a lady stranger, who was often there on the shore at an early hour, from love of the beach and its attractions, came within sound of the well-chosen words of Gen. Wallace, and asked the privilege of remaining to listen. Of course it was granted, and now that wonderful book can never be read by those ladies without a pleasant association with the sandy shore and the "vast and lonely sea."

The energetic Helen, having attended to the comfort of all the household, at last appeared upon the beach, and soon after the bathers began to gather also. The admitted listener departed, and the trio sat conversing and gazing, in a sweet restfulness peculiar to that hour and place.

They were not far from the rude steps, and sloping pathway, which the public generally used, and the crowd always gathered about the rope at that place. Tents were there also, and chairs, and not far away on

the sands, some old fish houses, and some houses for bathers to use for dressing. Away to the north there was another rope, and the dwellers on Sunset Heights mainly used that place for bathing. It was however considered less safe than the first and most frequented one.

And while the trio sat and gazed, they talked. The more dangerous spot for bathers came in for a share of attention, and Helen told her that one morning—the very morning when “the Death Angel flapped his dark wing o’er the wave,” but finally passed on without taking the fair young girl—she was on the beach, with a little niece of the family, who usually bathed close to the shore, but as the waves were rough, simply waded on the edge of the surf holding fast to the rope far up from the spot where the breakers rose and fell. “Soon we perceived,” said Helen, “that there was consternation among the older bathers. We turned our eyes from the little girl we were watching, and saw that many were rushing towards one spot on the beach, by the northern rope. There was a shouting and frantic motions. Strong men left the ocean where they were bathing and ran swiftly along the beach. Women followed. Children also began to go. I left Lillian to the care of her aunt, and started.” “Yes,” said the N. M. “and I rose from

the shawl on which I was seated, gathered up said shawl, with Lillian's clothes in it, and bidding her run also, in her bathing suit, I made the best of my way there, but Helen far outstripped me. When I arrived, Helen was walking beside the board on which the half-drowned girl was stretched, and called to me for the shawl, in which Lillian's clothes were borne along. Clothing, shoes, everything, was dropped on the hot sand, and the shawl was spread over the wet form of the unconscious teacher, and stout men bore her on, while I gathered up the dropped articles, and, accompanied by the little niece, followed along. While the indefatigable Helen, and others in Major Burbank's cottage, were resuscitating the rescued one, I dressed the wet and shivering child, and then joined the women in the little bed-room, and rubbed the cold feet, while some faithful worker rested a moment from her benevolent effort. That gave me the opportunity to see what I never saw before, nor since, the return of a spirit to this world, when it had been long unconscious, and there was danger that it would never revive in the flesh again. It was a glad yet solemn hour, and the voice of the young girl was as a sound from the far shore of a vast eternity. She had risen up on the board with a sort of convulsive effort, as they brought her over the

beach, opened her eyes, gazed around as if in farewell, laid back and never moved again, till she spoke in the query as to whether she was in the spirit land or not."

"That was a narrow escape?" remarked the invalid. "She was drifting far out toward the Silent Sea," answered the N. M., "when they cut those tent-ropes with which to attempt a rescue." "What tent-ropes?" "Why, after her rescuer had reached the big bather's rope with her, and was holding on there, and supporting her, it was necessary for him to have help, he was so exhausted, so they cut the tent-ropes, and threw to him, and he fastened the rope about her, so that they were both drawn in together. A board was used sometimes by the family which owned a large dog, when he played with them in the breakers, but the noble fellow was not at hand that day to join in the rescue. His board, however, served as a litter on which to bear the rescued one to the sheltering love and care which gave rich evidence of the sympathetic heart of Siasconset."

"Then you think Siasconset is not given over to fashion and folly, yet, even though it has begun to be a watering-place?" continued the invalid.

"Heart, indeed!" exclaimed the impetuous Helen, "if you had seen all I have seen, and known the ins and outs of families here, you would say there was little

danger of any failure to obtain sympathy in any needed direction. Siasconset has a noble, brave and generous heart, people with brains come here to rest the head, but neither they nor the natives intend to be hard-hearted or icebergs."

"I can answer for many of the natives," added the N. M., "that they can appreciate, and would not hesitate to adopt, Tuckerman's words :

'Give me the boon of love !  
I ask no more for fame ;  
Far better one unpurchased heart  
Than glory's proudest name.

\* \* \* \*

Give me the boon of love !  
The lamp of fame shines far,  
But love's soft light glows near and warm—  
A pure and household star.'

The natives are glad to have such visitors as are now drawn here, and hope that the island will always be attractive to such, who have hearts as well as heads, and noble purposes in life whether their purses are heavy or not."

"But tell me, Helen," asked the invalid, "how came you to get that wreath for the noble rescuer?"

"That wreath came to crown the victor of its own accord, so to speak," responded Helen, "for George

took us to ride that afternoon over toward Tom Nevers, and as we loitered on the way and gathered flowers, I found some shiny silver button and some meadow grasses to add to my bouquet. After we got home, the idea of a wreath that would not fade, at once came to my mind, and I selected the grasses, whose language is 'consolation,' and the silver button, you know, is often called 'life-everlasting.' They seemed appropriate—they could be preserved—and I used them. I hope they are still in that wreath to-day, and that the wreath is as full of pleasant association to him who received it, as it was to me when I made it."

"Did you see the lady he rescued, again, after she was recovered?" inquired the invalid.

"Yes, indeed! She was a teacher in the city of Washington, you know; and the superintendent of Washington schools was here with his family at the time. He and his wife would not let her go back to the hotel, after the sad experience, but took her to their own cottage, and there I saw her; she was lying on the bed at 'Hearts-Ease' Cottage. I can seem to see her now, with that pretty, blue jacket on, and a bunch of daisies at her belt. No more hotel meals for her. No more loneliness. She was as if at home. There again was the heart of Siasconset seen; for the Wilsons were suc



frequent visitors that they and 'Sconset seemed to have adopted each other. Many a time have the 'Sconseters seen Mr. Wilson with his bag of 'penny shells,' wending his way home from Low Beach, and all were pleased who knew why they were gathered and saved."

"Why, what *could* he do with them?" and the invalid's handsome eyes opened wide as she asked the question.

"He took them to Washington," said Helen, "and gave them to the children of the primary schools who were learning arithmetic, and could use them in adding and subtracting."

"How admirable!" exclaimed the invalid, whose many years of successful teaching enabled her to appreciate his wise fore-thought.

"Do you remember what Miss Garrison said to you, Helen?" asked the N. M.

"Oh, yes! When I asked her if she would ever go in bathing again, she said she should like to try it another summer, to show Siasconset that she had no ill-will against it or its treacherous surf."

"There spoke the brave and noble spirit!" said the invalid. "She was worthy to be an object of sympathy and tender interest in the heart of Siasconset. Have you ever seen her since?"

“Yes, in Washington, once, and her beloved mother was with her; a pleasing gentlewoman so precious to the daughter that she thoughtfully begged those who were near her at the time of her peril and rescue, not to let the incident get into the papers, lest the dear mother might hear of it and be affected in health by the thought of her child’s peril.”

“Do you wonder,” asked the N. M. of the invalid, “that we listened with unusual interest to the hymn :

‘Jesus, lover of my soul.’

on that night following her danger, and thought of the hero also as we remembered how ‘the nearer waters rolled’ in that awful period of suspense and effort?”

“And how that magnificent voice of Mr. Brooks rose and fell in the cadences of the familiar hymn, while the tears rained down many cheeks, as they gratefully thought of the danger and deliverance!” added Helen, “Oh, Jean, you should hear him! And you will hear him when the little Chapel is dedicated. His generous heart will be recognised in the thrilling tones of that inspiring voice.”

And thus they talked, changing the theme from time to time, till the last bather rushed up the sands toward the dry clothing, and the last acquaintance greeted them that morning by “the vast and lonely sea.”

## CHAPTER VIII.

## SESACHACHA.

“They called the pond Sesachacha,  
Whatever that may mean,  
I only know the fairies dwelt  
Above its silver sheen.

\* \* \* \* \*

A blessing on the fairy pond,  
The oars that, glinting, swing,  
Where cliffs re-echo, soft and low,  
The songs we used to sing!”

EUNICE B. LAMBERTON.

**D**O look across to the ‘Ocean View,’ Helen! the steps are full of people, and there are pleasure wagons, and, I verily believe, fishing-poles, and where *can* they be going?” exclaimed the invalid, a part of whose pleasure consisted in keeping her lovely eyes wide open for all the new sights, and her mind alert to add always to its store.

“Shall I run across and inquire?” was the humorous

response of the busy Helen, who could usually guess at what others would make effort to learn, and her guess would be equal to their study, often-times.

“Oh, no!” laughed her sister, “I think I shall survive even if I don’t find out, but I do believe they are going pond-fishing. Are there any ponds or brooks around here?”

“I know,” said the N. M. hastening to air her superior knowledge, “they are going to ‘Sachacha.’”

“And where is that, pray?”

“You wouldn’t ask, Jean, if you remembered Northrup’s ‘Chapter ix’ as you do Childe Harold’s Cantos, for he gives a glowing picture of his Squantum at ‘Sachacha Pond.’”

“A squantum? oh yes—a sort of picnic.”

“A picnic with pond-fishing thrown in!” interjected Helen.

“Do let me get the book and read what the genial ‘Squire says’—and away the N. M. sped to the sitting-room where ‘Sconset Cottage Life’ had an honored place upon the table, with the albums and autograph books of various sizes.

Then she read the charming and truthful description, as follows :

“What a delightful ride that was! Out beyond the

town into the fenceless fields, over the swelling waves of the landscape, through little vales and over the ridges and around the mounds :—skirting little emerald ponds no bigger than a village door-yard and surrounded by wild shrubbery, golden-rod and flaming flowers;—out among the heather, the dwarf oaks no higher than your knee, the creeping meal-berry vines with hard, red fruit, like beads, the low, huckleberry bushes tempting you to dismount over the seat and back-step ; winding and turning and following the parallel ruts wherever they led ; at length coming to a gate and a vast sheep-pasture, and letting ourselves through and carefully closing the gate after us ; catching gleams of the sea now and then on our right, and on our left looking up with respect on the low range of Saul's Hills as being the highest land in all Nantucket; at length by a swoop and a turn coming down from the west upon a bay of 'Sachacha Pond, our 'Squantum-ground.'

A small, deserted house, surrounded by soft, luxuriant turf, green and inviting, made the objective point which all pleasure seeking requires, while the adjacent barn ministered comfort and protection to our horses from the August sun. After descending from our vehicles and bestowing edibles and extra apparel under a broad, extemporized awning, we strolled down to the

bay. A thirty foot whale-boat, propelled by two small boys, leisurely approached, and the round dozen of us embarked and slowly moved out into the lake, to the edge of the shallow water, where for half an hour in a most juvenile fashion, and in high glee, we fished for perch—that being strictly typical of the legitimate squantum in this particular locality.\*

“Now I understand it all,” said the invalid, as the N. M. ceased reading, “and the next thing to be done is to live it all out. I suppose we also can go to Sach—what do you call it?”

“Sesachacha, is the name—’Sachacha, for short,” replied the N. M., and Helen added,

“Get strong, Jean, as fast as you can, and we will get the boys—I mean Robert and George—to carry us over, all hands, and we’ll gather huckleberries and pond-fish at the same time.”

But they never did. They went in sight of ’Sachacha Pond, however. How blue and beautiful the little lake appeared! That was a glorious, summer day, when Robert, the elder brother of the N. M., drew up his nice, spring wagon before the door, and Helen mounted to his side on the front seat, while the invalid and the N. M. filled the back one. Off they went, receiving a

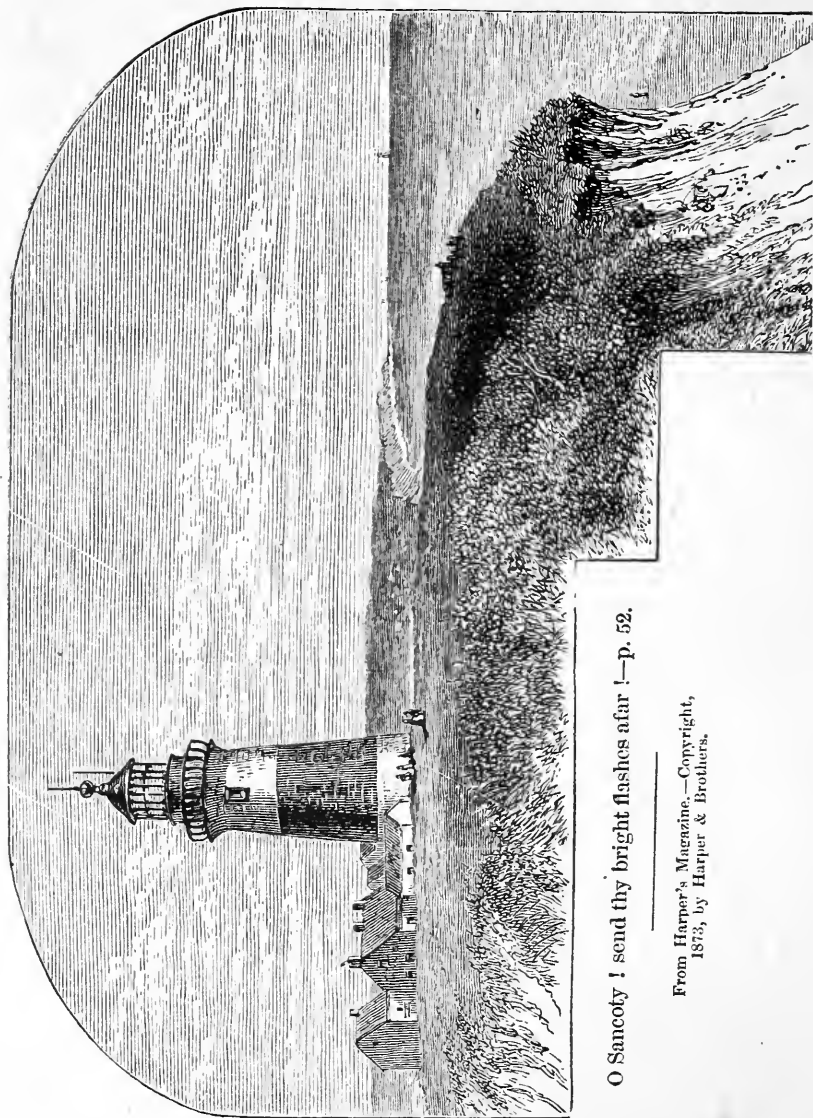
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\* Northrop’s “’Sconset Cottage Life,” p. 78.

pleasant greeting as they passed George's door, where Mary Eliza waved her "good bye." On, over the hill, along the grassy roads, through the gates, up to Sancoty Head. "Oh, what a glorious view!" exclaimed the invalid, and then sat in rapt silence gazing on the broad, blue ocean in front, the eye sweeping the horizon for snowy sails, and often gratified. Far away stretched the white and curving beach, and in the distance rose dimly to view the tall tower of the light-house at Great Point.

"Did you ever go there?" asked the invalid.

"Yes," answered the N. M., "once, and only once in all my life, and that was in my half-century year. If I had been born a boy I know I would not have waited so long as that, for, from early childhood I had desired to go there, having been stimulated to do so, by the story often told me, of my own mother's delight, when in her childhood, she was a visitor for a day to the far-off light-house, fifteen or more miles from town. That mother died in my infancy, you know, but any thing which she enjoyed had a romantic charm for me. I wished to live over her pleasant experiences. But I never did, till, in a North-East storm, one August, my brother George took me in his covered wagon, with a buffalo robe about us to keep us warm. A dear friend



O Sancoty ! send thy bright flashes afar !—p. 52.

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who desired to observe the botany of that region, (she being, moreover, the lady President of the Botanical Society, whom you have met,) accompanied us, and my nephew, Lawrence, walked the whole way—ten miles—from 'Sconset, to meet us there, and learn from her about the flora of that sandy point."

"Was it worth while?" asked the invalid, languidly.

"Indeed it was worth while, to us all, and when you want to see a sample of the coarser sand on that beach, which seems so far away, come to my home, and seek for a large, glass jar of it, which stands upon the revolving book-case in my study."

"Among other useless trash!" exclaimed Helen, playfully, yet with a look at the white stone set in a ring upon her finger, (which quartz pebble came from Fire Island beach, where Margaret Fuller was shipwrecked), that proved she was not unmindful of the value given to inanimate things by association with the life of a human being, or the memory of red-letter days.

The party in the wagon alighted, and sat for a while upon a bench near the edge of the grassy bank. Steep and bare was the sandy cliff, as they looked over the edge, and far below them was the white and narrow beach, with the surf gently breaking on the shore, so gently that the sound scarce rose to their ears. It was a

perfect, summer morning! As rare as any June day! And the memory of it lingers with every one of that party as a sweet expression of the divine peace. Instinctively the conversation turned upon the presence of God in Nature, and there was expressed a holy gladness in the thought that the True and the Beautiful are one with the Good, and that mortals may expect the descent of power to grow in usefulness and excellence, as they lift, in aspiring sincerity, the prayer of the Psalmist, "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish Thou the work of our hands, yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it!" That prayer can only be truly prayed by those whose work is beneficent, and who have learned how to serve God by serving humanity.

The summons to return to the village came all too soon; but the kind brother had many cares, and the little leisure for the ride had all been used. Reluctantly they turned their backs on 'Sachacha and Sancoty. Quietly they rode along till they met a little boy, who pleasantly opened a gate for them, and after closing it, rewarded himself by a ride. Standing on the iron step of the wagon, he held fast to the back of the seat, upon which sat the invalid and the N. M. Opening her sun-umbrella for comfortable shade, the N. M. suddenly became oblivious to all that occurred, and to this day is

unable to recall the swift-following events. Evidently the horse perceived the motion of the opening, jumped forward and ran, the little boy was jerked off the step; he clung, naturally, to the seat—it was not fastened!—and over went backward those who were upon it, striking on the back of the head, and losing consciousness for a brief season.

The horse dashed forward, and the driver sought to control him. Helen looked round, and saw no back seat, no companions! Where were the sister and friend! Quick as thought, frantic with fear, as she saw two immovable forms upon the ground behind her, Helen leaped over the seat and out of the wagon, while Robert quieted the horse, and then hastily returned to the scene of the catastrophe. The N. M. was struggling to rise, declaring she was unhurt, when her brother reached her. He put his arms around her and kissed her, in joy that she was yet alive, but with no little anxiety as he perceived her incoherent and rapid speech.

The invalid had whispered to her sister, "Helen, I am killed," but the undaunted Helen, to whom the knowledge that instant death had not come to her dear ones seemed as an inspiration for effort in their behalf, soon had her upon her feet, and with the brother's help, had both the injured ones in the wagon, and they rapid-

ly sought their cottage home. As they passed the door from whence was waved the cordial greeting, the unwonted position of the ladies on the floor of the wagon, awoke surprise and anxiety. "Something has happened to them!" said George and his wife, and the dinner-table was left at once that help might be rendered, if needful.

Then was the heart of Siasconset seen again. Not only relatives, but neighbors, and strangers came to render aid. The invalid was placed upon a bed, the N. M. on a lounge, and for a little season the sympathy of the village flowed toward Coffyn Cottage, and its inmates. Even a lady physician of Wellesley College came with her medical aid, and though she has since changed her name on receiving a wedding ring, yet the hearts of her patients will always cherish that of Dr. Emily Jones.

The accident proved to have no very serious result, and after a few days, the ladies who had thus unceremoniously left the wagon, were as well as ever. But they had learned how sympathetic 'Sconset folks and their visitors could be. Flowers, fruit, and dainty dishes—even little 'Sconset birds prepared with culinary art—evinced that sympathy, and loving words, written and spoken, are laid up in the archives of grateful memories.

It was a day long to be remembered. The N. M. can never forget the venerable father, with his anxious look, listening to her incoherent speech, and rapid questioning, while tears filled the eyes of the brother who had meant to give his sister a pleasant outing, and was distressed at such an ending of the ride; and the invalid will long remember the devotion of Helen to her comfort, the long night when she watched anxiously lest the accident might make the invalid despair of ever realizing health again, and all the many evidences that though she saw Sesachacha only afar off, she felt the beating of the heart of Siasconset very near.

## CHAPTER IX.

## SUNSET GLORY.

“I stood on Siasconset’s hill,  
Just at the set of sun,  
And looked abroad o’er that fair plain,  
And down by Philip’s run.  
The kine were winding o’er the lea,  
And, far as eye could reach,  
The sheep were feeding quietly,  
From Plainfield to Low Beach.”

GEORGE HOWLAND FOLGER.

**W**HAT lovely sunsets we have on Nantucket!” exclaimed Helen, one night, as she sat on the low step at the front door of Coffyn Cottage, and saw the visitors, men and women, singly or in groups, sometimes two only, whispering low, and arm in arm, (one could easily fancy them lovers), walking up New Street toward the hill, which seemed the village boundary on the west.”

“Why not go to the top of the hill; with the rest of

of the people?" suggested the N. M. "Jean can read Carlyle, by Froude, and we'll study Nature."

Jean did not object, for she knew that if she did not care to be wearied by the walk to the hill-top, she could yet enjoy much of the wonderful glory which was so often all abroad at the sunset hour.

So, arm in arm, Helen and the N. M. strolled toward the western hill-top, and, when there, stood in rapturous amazement, at the glory of the heavens, and the wide landscape spread beneath. Familiarity could not make this gorgeous sunset common. Like Truth, however old, it was forever fresh. To lovers of the Beautiful it was untiringly welcome. The clouds were glowing with the most brilliant sunset hues, so rich in tint and blazing in light, as to be utterly indescribable; poetry even failed to present their beauty of coloring, and "radiancy of glory,"—and the pencil of a Claude would fail to reproduce it. No wonder the summer visitors, and such of the villagers as were not too busy with the "chores," flocked to the summit of the hill whereon the school-house stood, to view the wonderful display of sunset glory as fully as possible.

Nor was it strange that the N. M. repeated the lines at the head of this chapter, and so praised the whole poem, and the Nantucketer who wrote it, that on their

return the little book compiled by Miss Lucy C. Starbuck, entitled "Seaweeds from the Shores of Nantucket," was taken up, and the poem read aloud in the sonorous voice and characteristic manner of the elocutionist—Helen. When it was read, and the history of the island, and especially of the two Indian tribes who inhabited it before the white race came, had been freely commented on, the N. M. expressed her special satisfaction with the two following stanzas, which she read aloud with an energy of manner and the depth of tone which proved her pride of ancestry; and her interest in all that concerned the special glory of Nantucket, or won for the dear island, in any sense, the respect and applause of posterity.

“Our pilgrim-fathers forth were driven  
By persecution's rod,  
And sought this isle among the waves,  
Where they could worship God.  
When autumn's clouds lowered in the sky,  
Old Thomas dared the sea,  
With Edward nobly by his side,  
They'd die or they'd be free.

They were a race of giant-souls,  
Of stout and stalwart forms;  
In boyhood rocked upon the waves,  
And cradled in the storms.



They bore our country's flag aloft,  
In battle and in breeze,  
The first to show its rebel stars  
Within Old England's seas."

"Were Nantucketers really the first to bear the flag we all love so well to Great Britain?" asked Jean.

"So it seems," answered the N. M., "according to a statement in Godfrey's 'Guide.'"

"Ho! that may not be correct," exclaimed the outspoken Helen, "for Godfrey declares you to be born at 'Sconset, and your memory doesn't agree with his statement!"

"My father has been so long here at 'Sconset," remarked the N. M., "that I suppose Mr. Godfrey thought all of his children must have been born here, whereas only the youngest was—and I am the oldest."

"Well—where were you born?" asked Jean.

"In town—in Hussey Street, Nantucket. Lower Hussey Street, we called it, and grandfather used to laughingly say he owned all the houses in the street. The 'all' was but one, and in that one both my father and myself were born. The house belonged to my father's grandfather, Nathaniel Coffin, and when my father was a baby—over eighty years ago—the house stood where now the Ocean House stands.

“Nothing like knowing all about one’s birth-place and ancestry,” playfully responded Helen, “but I want to know about the flag.”

“Well, Helen, let me read you this paragraph on Godfrey’s 338 page: “At the earliest moment after peace had been declared, when safety rendered it expedient, the ship ‘Bedford,’ Capt. William Mooers, with a load of four hundred and eighty-seven butts of oil, was despatched to London, and to this ship belongs the honor of having been the first vessel to hoist the American flag in any British port.’ And a note says: ‘F. C. Sanford, Esq., informs the compiler that this was Feb. 3, 1783; and that she arrived at Nantucket from London, May 31, 1783, her entry at the custom house at the time being in his possession. Does’nt that sound ‘all correct on the right,’ Helen?”

“Oh yes, and ‘all correct on the left,’ too; but it is all back of our memory, and who cares about it anyway!” replied Helen, who cared more for the gorgeous beauty of the sunset hour, or the brilliant coloring and fairy forms of the wild flowers everywhere blooming in the vicinity of ’Sconset, than she did for all the ancestral legends in the world; and while she was an admirable teacher of history, she was a yet more enthusiastic student of botany. Hence her reply.

But the N. M. was not stirred in spirit. She kept on thinking of the far-off days. "Why my father's father was only seven years old then! There were only a little over four thousand people on the whole island, and they were about building Great Point Light-house. There were no public schools for forty years after that."

"What will you say when I remind you that *twice* in Godfrey's book, you are mentioned as being a native of 'Sconset?" said Helen, who had become somewhat weary of a matter that had been often mentioned in somewhat irate fashion by the N. M.

"Do! what can I do, but say he didn't know any better, and so excuse him?" replied the N. M.

"I rather think," said Jean, quietly, "that you had better call to mind the difficulties you have found yourself when writing of people and things, and while you bemoan your own inaccuracies in what you desired to be correct statements, because of your own insufficient knowledge or erroneous information, you had better forgive poor Godfrey. I don't believe he meant to make incorrect statements."

"Neither do I, pacific Jean!" responded the N. M., "and I will forgive him, but I shall set the matter right, all the same."

"All-e-samee!" laughed Helen, "and we'll call our dear invalid, 'Jean, the Pacificator!'"

Then the conversation went back to the Indians, and all were interested, as by reference to various authorities they learned that only ten years after the Pilgrim fathers landed, occurred a war between the Indian tribes of the East and West parts of the island; the last war that occurred here, and the only one of which we have any knowledge. The island was then largely covered with forest trees, most of which were oaks. Some of the oldest houses on the island, and notably the old chapel, or vestry, of the North Church, was built of island wood.

“Yes, you two school-ma’ams,” said the N. M., “had better whet up your memories concerning history, for it was only twenty-one years after the Pilgrims landed that this island was deeded to Thomas Mayhew by Lord Sterling.”

“Who *assumed* the right to do so !” sharply suggested the keen-eyed Helen.

“Mayhew felt he had power to sell the property at any rate, from that deed, and so,” said the N. M. “he passed it over to my ancestors in 1659—which was thirty-nine years after the Mayflower came.”

“I thought you were going to say some of your ancestors came over in the Mayflower,” laughed Helen.

“Perhaps they did,” replied the N. M., nothing daunted ; “for was not the pilot of the Mayflower named Robert Coffin ?”

"I might have known you would have found a connection some way," added Helen.

The N. M. smiled, and went on to say, "Eighty pounds and two beaver hats, was not a large price to give, for this delightful island."

"That depends!" exclaimed Helen, "let's see. £80= \$400! Well, it's worth all that now, any how, and your ancestors coming here made it worth visiting."

"Yes, you need not laugh, Helen. People have always liked to visit Nantucket. It has had not only Governors and Presidents, but a royal visitor, for King Philip was here in 1665."

"How long after the Pilgrims landed?" roguishly asked Helen.

"Well, forty-five years," answered the N. M., "but now I'll thank you to cease asking that question, for I'll date in future from the coming of Pilgrims Thomas Macy and Edward Starbuck, and Chief Magistrate Tristram Coffyn, and Interpreter Peter Folger, and Thomas Barnard and Christopher Hussey, Thomas Coleman, and the Swains, and the rest of the original purchasers and their associates." It was fifteen years after the island belonged to my ancestors before the warlike chief came. And he came in no pacific spirit. His hostile appearance made the inhabitants apprehensive, for the

English were few in number, and ill prepared to meet a foreign foe."

"Of course he didn't come for his health, as I did," said the invalid, "what induced him to dare the dangerous wave in his canoe? He couldn't have had any other craft."

"You are right about the mode of transit," replied the N. M., "he and his fellow-warriors came in canoes, in pursuit of an Indian they wished to punish. And what do you suppose was the culprit's offence?"

"Perhaps he was thievish," quickly answered Helen, "as many Indians are."

"Thieves are not all of Indian blood," continued the N. M., "but this man had broken no moral law. He had only set at naught an Indian custom."

"Was that enough to rouse a king?" exclaimed Jean. "It was the king himself who had been dishonored by the mention of his father's name," responded the N. M. "Let me read you what Obed Macy says about it in his 'History of Nantucket.'"

So the N. M. sought the volume and then read as follows: "Rehearsing the name of the dead, if it should be that of a distinguished person, was decreed by the natives a very high crime, for which nothing but the life of the culprit could atone. Philip, having now the

poor criminal in possession, made preparations to execute vengeance upon him, when the English spectators, commiserated his condition, and made offers of money to ransom his life. Philip listened to these offers and mentioned a sum which would satisfy him; but so much could not be collected. He was informed of this, but would not lessen his demand. The whites, however, collected all they could, in the short time allowed them, in hopes that he would be satisfied, when assured that more could not be found; but instead of this, he persisted in his demand with threatening language, pronounced with an emphasis which foreboded no good. This very much provoked the English, so that they concluded among themselves to make no farther offers, but try to frighten him away without giving him any more money. The sum raised, which was all that the inhabitants possessed, was eleven pounds; this had already been paid to him, and could not be required back again. Philip had surrounded, and taken possession of, one or two houses, to the great terror of the inmates; in this dilemma they concluded to put all to risk; they told him, that, if he did not immediately leave the island, they would rally the inhabitants, and fall upon him and cut him off to a man. Not knowing their defenceless condition, he happily took the alarm, and left the

island as soon as possible. The prisoner was then set at liberty."

Helen laughed heartily over "the bluster of the whites," as she termed it, and the question arose whether King Philip was cowardly or mercenary, and finally decided that he was both; but all justified the whites in seeking to buy the life of the poor man, and all rejoiced that the Indians of the island had forever passed away. The civilization of later days could not harmonize with their primitive habits and crude ideas, and there seems to be no room in this busy life of the nineteenth century for these so-called children of Nature.

"Did you ever see any of the Nantucket Indians?" asked Jean of the N. M.

"No," was the reply, "for every full-blooded Indian was gone, I suppose, before I arrived. In 1764 there was a sort of plague which swept away over two-hundred, and there were left only 136, it is said, and they faded and failed, till, in my childhood, there was only one man with Indian blood in his veins—and he died about 1855. I saw him several times, and once conversed a little with him. He was gentle and courteous, as I remember. There's a good portrait of him in the Nantucket Atheneum."

A little more conversation about Abram Quarry (or



Quady) and then the ripple of chat was suddenly stopped in its quiet flow, as callers entered, and the short summer evening had reached bed-time when they again crossed the threshold of the cottage, with their cheery "Good night and pleasant dreams!"

## CHAPTER X.

## SUNRISE AT SIASCONSET.

"Loved sea-girt isle! the murmuring waves,  
And stern old ocean's ceaseless roar,  
Bring back to mind such memories dear  
Of days, when, on thy pebbly shore,  
Our childish feet have wandered far  
In search of treasures from the sea:  
We recked not of the world beyond  
Such sweet content we found in thee!"

MRS. MARGARET G. LaFORGE.

**I**T was the morning hour—not "a morning without clouds," but one when the light, fleecy clouds were just tinted with color, and finally illumed with glory, when Helen sought the beach alone. She had been wakeful all the night previous, and listened with unspeakably solemn, yet sweet, emotions, to the low murmur of the surf. At times there would come the longer, louder roll which betokened a larger wave which had found its rest; a wave started in some far-off storm-swept sea to find the final pause upon that island shore.

As the morning dawned, she softly rose and dressed for the beach, then, slipping out gently from the back door of the cottage, she quietly threaded the little passages, called, by courtesy, "streets," and was soon upon the brow of the hill above the spot where the boats were drawn up on the beach.

All was silent in that early hour of the summer morning, save the incessant murmur of the heaving sea as it gently touched the sandy shore. No sign of life except that restless ocean, and the sea-gull sweeping along above some crested wave. She descended by the stony pathway, trod the planks, and soon found herself beside the surf which lapped lazily the long, white beach. It was an hour fitted for solemn communion with the Highest and Holiest. An hour for praise! An hour for reverent awe and wondering delight! Unanswered queries arose in her mind. Unanswerable questions formulated themselves, on the lips which ever and anon opened to utter the sublime ascriptions of the ancient Psalmist:

"The sea is His and He made it."

"The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters."

But there was no response from Nature, save with Nature's voices, to the eye and ear, viz.: the rippling

wave of the summer surf, and the distant cry of the whirling sea-bird, as he skimmed along above the waves now glinting in the morning sunlight. The beauty of that hour was impressive. So was the silence. It brought the Presence close to the soul of Helen, and she repeated—

“The Infinite always is silent,  
It is only the Finite speaks,  
Our words are the idle wave-caps  
On the deep that never breaks.  
We may question with words of science—  
Explain, decide and discuss,  
But only in meditation  
The mystery speaks to us.”\*

Thus she lingered by the side of the ocean, till, after a long, quiet, restful period, the form of a human being was perceived upon the bank. He drew nearer and was recognized as a fisherman, who proceeded at once to his little dory, which he drew to the water side, and putting into it the bait and hooks, he launched it and himself out on the broad, peaceful waters, to procure the finny treasures that would secure him warm welcome from the villagers when he returned.

“Horace has gone out for blue-fish!” was the report

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\* John Boyle O'Reilly.

of Helen, when she at last returned to Coffyn Cottage, and found the old Captain 'on deck,' as he said, and the fire started for breakfast.

Domestic duties followed, and while the invalid after the early meal, had donned her scarlet wrapper, and gone out to see the lady of ladies—"Cousin Eliza"—the son of that lady, whose graphic speech and witty sentences were often quoted, made a brief call on Helen and the rest of the family. The N. M. was "in town;" the children gone out to play; the aged sea-captain was sunning himself on the bench in front of the house, and Helen was priding herself on having "improved the time," and gone ahead of all competitors, having, as she exultingly told the "Professor" and "Joseph," when they called, hung one hundred pieces on the line. For the "Professor" had come up from town with his family and friends, including the venerable, cheery, beloved grandmother, who was already quite far along in the nineties, and he was evidently a little annoyed at finding Helen at the wash-tub—an exultant piece of independence—rather than dressed and ready for the picnic party on the beach.

"Never mind, Robert," exclaimed she, "just leave your things here, and let me all alone, and when the time comes, you come for the coffee, and I will be all ready, and go with you."

And go she did. The early, morning walk had proved an inspiration. She had worked with a will, and the neatly dressed lady, who was greeted with loud hand-clapping and shouts as she appeared upon the beach—was able to exult over a fair day's work as she sat down to dinner on the sandy shore, with as "goodlie a companie" of scholarly and cultured and intelligent men and women as ever trod old 'Sconset beach. It does not detract from one's social position at 'Sconset if the head and hands are alike busy at the call of duty. The heart of Siasconset is in sympathy with Him who said, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work," and they are especially respected whose kind efforts help the weary ones to rest; removing the burden of care from those they love, and bearing it bravely with a strong and patient heart. She, who was the honored of all in that little, picnic party by the sea, had not wasted her ninety and more years in idleness. Head, heart, and hands had been busy for scores of years, for children and grandchildren, and at that advanced period in her life there were great-great-grandchildren to rise up and call her blessed. Merry laugh and pleasant speech; kindly advice and brilliant repartee; harmless gossip and neighborly talk; with the spices of literary criticism, and scholastic lore occasionally, made the sea-side party

memorable to all who were there; one of whom looks back upon it now from amidst the still more gladsome assemblage on the shining shore. Old age is not known beyond the river. The mind, when freed from the body, displays its own everlasting youth.

But even sea-shore parties must come to a close, and long before sunset the company was scattered, Coffyn Cottage received its accustomed number, and the others in their great beach-wagon rumbled up New Lane, reached the hill top, rode along in *silhouette* against the western horizon and then sank behind the hill, a merry party still, upon the road to town.

There were frequent callers at the cottage. One welcome couple came—the lame and the blind—but there was no halting in the steps which the spirit took as one of them walked along the pleasant paths of poetry, and no failure of vision as the other took the glass of faith and looked away to the delectable mountains. Retrospection and anticipation were robbed of their sorrow and doubt, as the promises of God were mentioned and the assurances of immortality remembered. To each and all were the words of the Master welcome:

“Where I am, there shall also my servant be.”

The heart of Siasconset throbs in sympathy with Whitter's words, declaring

“That Life is ever lord of death,  
And Love can never lose its own.”

However impressively the night in its solemn stillness falls over the quiet village, the hours of day are far more numerous, in the time when the visitors add their life to its cottages, and so memory dwells most readily upon the early morning hours, the glow of noontide, and the sunset glory.

Hence, Helen possesses, embalmed in memory, a vivid picture of that morning brightness on the shore of the vast ocean, and she is not alone in declaring that among the most interesting sights in all the world, inspiring and uplifting, may be counted sunrise at Siasconset.



## CHAPTER XI.

## THE DEDICATION OF THE CHAPEL.

“In this communion sweet,  
Hands clasp : hearts are replete  
With joy—with pain ;  
Our loved, with voices hushed,  
Strengthen faith in the trust  
‘That, somewhere, meet we must,’  
And live again.”

ELIZABETH STARBUCK.

**I**MMORTALITY awaits us. So the average 'Sconseter believes, for he has perceived the “old, old fashion of death,” of which Charles Dickens speaks so pathetically, and it is a comfort he would not forego to receive also the idea of “that older fashion, Immortality.” For almost a century, the rhymes called “'Sconset Laws,” have familiarized their readers with the idea that there is great, religious freedom in the sea-blest village.

“Here invalids in Church and State  
Are all made whole at 'Sconset.”

But the time came when there was a large majority who desired a summer chapel. A place of worship was at last erected. Men and women of all grades of belief contributed the money needed for that purpose, and it was with a gladness of heart like that of ancient Israel, that, at last, the villagers and their summer guests were able to say, with the Psalmist : "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."

The day was bright. It was Thursday, July 26, 1883. Some of the choice spirits in the town of Nantucket found their way over the flowery plains to the village on "the bank." And 'Sconset was in all its glory. Villagers and summer visitors alike, wended their way to the little chapel on New Street. It was of unpretentious architecture, though it had a small tower, from which the sound of a Sabbath call to worship was to issue, and plain and neat as it was, the one window of colored glass was sufficient to give an æsthetic air to the sacred edifice.

The exercises, as might be expected, were unpretentious, and consisted of addresses, prayers, the reading of the Scriptures, and sacred song, accompanied by the music of a small, parlor organ. Addresses were made by Rev. J. A. Savage, pastor of the Unitarian church in Nantucket ; Rev. W. R. Eastman, Congregational pastor

in South Framingham, Mass. ; and Rev. Phebe A. Hanaford, at that time Universalist pastor in Jersey City, N. J. Prayers were offered by Rev. J. Albert Wilson, Unitarian pastor in Bridgewater, Mass. ;\* Rev. P. D. Cowan, (Congregational) of Wellesley, Mass. ; and the benediction was given, finally, by Rev. L. Boyer, the rector of St. Paul's Church, Nantucket. The Scriptures were admirably read by Rev. Louise S. Baker, the beloved woman-pastor of the Congregational church in Nantucket. There was then "variety in unity," at this dedication of the Union chapel at 'Sconset.

Bright flowers adorned the pulpit, and the music was so in keeping with the high character of the rare occasion that all hearts were wafted heavenward in sympathy with the tones that had in them more of heaven than earth. Of those who sang, as well of those who spoke, some have already passed to the world of light and glory,

"Where congregations ne'er break up,  
And Sabbaths have no end."

Only one of the addresses was written, and that was by the woman whose island birth and training had given her more opportunity than any other of the speakers, to

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\* Since deceased,

know the circumstances which made the matter of erecting a place of worship at so late a period, so entirely reasonable, though it appeared so strange unto the summer visitors.

Rev. Mrs. Hanaford spoke from John iv., 23, 24, in the following words:

#### DEDICATORY ADDRESS.

“Our blessed Master said to the astonished listener who had always worshipped on Mount Gerizim, and who believed that Jesus, being a Jew, would declare that in Jerusalem alone might the devout soul draw near to God, the words that ring in the chambers of my soul to-day, as the thought which we should not overlook, as we come together, in reverent gladness, to set apart this edifice to the special service of Almighty God, in the customary Sabbath exercises of instruction, exhortation, prayer and praise. It has already been consecrated by the free-will offerings of those who believe in the value of religious teachings and influences. It has been dedicated in the thought and prayer of those who desired it, and labored for it, long before the architect planned it, or the corner stone was laid. Souls that have never seen it, and hardly call to mind the ground whereon it stands, have watched the island papers with an interest as de-

vout as it was affectionate, and as much in the way of consecration as any services we can hold to-day. Heart and hand have devoted this edifice to the Lord, in desire, in purpose, in execution, but to-day, as we come to the place where we rejoice together, and say: 'Come, sing unto the Lórd a new song,' for the greatly-needed place of worship is now erected, 'let us remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said:'

'The hour cometh and now is, when the true worshipper shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.'

And I call attention to these words just now and here in order to assert that, while I have earnestly desired a church edifice in this village, and am grateful that our eyes are permitted to behold this consummation of devout desire and effort, I am just as certain that worshippers have dwelt in this village, and that the incense of true prayer has arisen to God, and the reverent waiting before God that He approves, has been the experience of many souls who have dwelt here, though, for all those long years, there has been no edifice specially set apart for public worship. To our knowledge, during the two centuries and a quarter in which this island has been

inhabited by English-speaking people, there has been no house of worship, but they who came hither at intervals, were men and women who believed in finding God within, as well as, and perhaps rather than, without. Quakerism, in its most devout form, existed on this island for more than a century, and every Quaker carried his church edifice about with him. He looked into his own heart, not to write, as the poet directed, but to adore. He listened to the voices around him—the voices of nature and of man—but he obeyed the voice within—the voice of God—of the in-dwelling Christ—the Word that could evermore be made flesh as the obedient soul carried out in daily life the behest of the King enthroned above the human will. Hence, it was not that devout souls did not visit this village, or tarry here, in the former days, but that they really had not so much need—according to their view of the matter—of a house of worship, and so they did not build one, and their descendants copied after them. That was one reason why no house of prayer was ever erected here, and another was, that only for a brief season, during any year, did families reside here, and abundant provision was made for the needs of worshippers in the good, old town, eight miles away. When they were at home, they all had opportunities to assemble themselves together for worship. When they

were away at 'Sconset, or anywhere, beside, upon the face of the globe—the Quakers among them, at least, could worship, alone or together, indoors or out, and be content.

It is almost within my memory that families have resided here the year round. This also will account for the fact that no church had been erected here till now. But the need came with the increasing population, and with the fact that children were in households whose stay was continuous. When the vibration of families between 'Sconset and Nantucket ceased, and the winter hours as well as summer ones were to be spent here by families, it was perceived that a place for religious services was needed, and, as in many small communities, the school-house was used for a church, as opportunity for religious instruction and worship was afforded. Visiting ministers from Nantucket, visiting ministers from abroad (notably the sainted Lucretia Mott) lifted their voices with the word of power and blessing in that little school-house, till it has become to many souls a place of inspiring and hallowed association.\* But in the Providence that is in unslumbering—the inevitable and beneficent working of divine law—this village has become a place of rest and needed recreation to a far larger number of men, women and children, than the early

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\* There the speaker preached her first sermon, in 1865.

visitors could ever have dreamed would sojourn here, and then came the necessity for a more commodious place of worship. The divine law of demand and supply—the fulfillment of His purpose who marketh all our necessities—has sent hither those who felt the need of the time, and had the means to assist in meeting it. Christian zeal and enthusiasm, friendly interest and benevolent purpose, have done the work, under the guiding Providence of God, that has brought us to this hour of victory and rejoicing. One after another the obstacles have been met, and, by kind hearts and willing hands, been conquered; till to-day this little church lifts its spire heavenward, and tells to every visitor, who rises over yonder, grassy hill-top, from the flowery plain beyond, that He who stretched the blue and sparkling waters before them, and is saying to the ocean when its billows rise amid the storms that sometimes howl around us,—‘thus far shalt thou come, and no farther, and there shall thy proud waves be stayed,’—He is recognized, and, Sabbath after Sabbath, worshipped with the voice of prayer and praise. Worship was here before the island Indians built their wigwams, for the ocean waves lifted their solemn voices before the history of our race began. And still they worship, and we feel their inspiration.



"The ocean looketh up to heaven,  
As 'twere a living thing,  
The homage of its waves is given  
In ceaseless worshipping.

They kneel upon the sloping sands  
As bends the human knee—  
A beautiful, a tireless band—  
The priesthood of the sea.'

The Indian was God's child. He was not undevout. He was of those who could see God in the sunset clouds we watch with reverent interest, and hear Him in the mighty storm-wind which bids us lift the cry, 'God save the mariner upon the dangerous coast!' Worship was here, the Indian bowing before the Great Spirit, and looking forward, with all the light he had, to better days upon the happy hunting-ground. And when the greater Light came with the race which is in every land showing the divine law of 'the survival of the fittest,' surely there was worship then. He worships God who helps his fellow man. The Baptist, Peter Folger,\* the Quaker, Mary (Coffin) Starbuck,† worshipped, and not alone! Among their descendants, and the descendants of those who were with them in those far-off years have

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\* Maternal grandfather of Benjamin Franklin.

† The "great Mary Starbuck" daughter of Tristram Coffin.

ever been found true worshippers who have—with forms or without forms—with outward or with inward reverence—or both—respected Gospel truth, and adored the ‘One God, and Father of all, who is above all, through all, and in you all.’

The procession of the years and the generations have brought us here to continue the voice of worship which Nature and Humanity so long ago began. Let us, as we now dedicate this welcome edifice, so long desired, rededicate our own hearts also to the worship of Almighty God, our ever-loving Father and eternal Friend, endeavoring so to live each secular day of our earthly lives, as well as every Sabbath day—that we shall help to carry out the evident design of Jesus when he said the true worshipper shall ‘worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.’ As John Weiss wrote, so let us say—

‘The truest worship is a life—

All dreaming I resign;

We lay our offering at thy feet;

Our lives, O Christ, are Thine!’ ”

Thus ended the address of the woman-preacher on that day. And so, with loving thought of many who

had dwelt in 'Sconset cottages, and from those lowly homes had gone to the many mansions of the Father's house, the speaker and others "thanked God and took courage," for the little chapel stood for faith, and hope, and love,—it meant God here and everywhere,—and it stood also for a belief in Immortality.

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE NEPHEWS.

“Hast thou oft times our island been on,  
To seek for food to break thy fast?  
And did'st thou think that thy broad pinion  
Had brought thee here to breath thy last?”

ELIZA BARNEY.

**T**HUS sang one of the cultured, island women—a descendant of “the great Mary Starbuck!” that renowned daughter of Tristram Coffin, who was one of the judges in the land, when the dwellers on Nantucket were but few, and the Indians still lingered in their native haunts. The lines are a part of a soliloquy over an owl which had been shot by a sportsman, and might often be said of other owls prepared by the taxidermist for those visitors who adorn their libraries with the bird of wisdom. Owls may be found on Nantucket, natives as well as visitors, and their hoot is often heard on the road over the moor to 'Sconset, as well as round Tom Nevers pond, which seems to be a favorite resort. They are usually small and brown. It is said that while little local

interest is as yet displayed in regard to ornithology, still "Nantucket furnishes a rare field for the study of migratory birds, it being the last place they leave after their season in the regular breeding places farther up the coast. From Nantucket, they pass to the capes below into warmer weather." Thus the island is a resort for the sportsman as well as others, and the gun, as well as the fish-line, is considered part of the complete equipment of a young man who is a 'Sconset visitor. Tradition states that a well-known lady-poet of the island, for many years a teacher, once narrowly escaped being shot, as, in her season of rambling, after the school at 'Sconset was closed, she sat behind a sort of sand-dune on the beach, her head, or hat, being mistaken for a good sized bird in the distance. As the gunner approached so as to get a fair shot, the head moved, the bird-like appearance was gone, and Miss Anna Gardner was spared to add yet further to her labors for humanity, and to the well-deserved honors which greet her declining years.

The N. M. had told this story of a narrow escape for a score of times or more (her long-cherished fear of a gun having stamped it in memory) when Rollie—the Boston nephew—came running into the "Auntie" who was always ready to meet emergencies, and displayed a

finger which had been injured while using a small pistol, and the ever-ready and willing Helen soon had it in charge.

“You ought to have been a physician and surgeon!” said Rollie, when the finger was duly dressed and made comfortable, and all the hearers said “Amen,” each after his and her own fashion. Helen did possess natural aptitude for rendering medical or surgical aid, in such cases, and was often in demand. Day after day Rollie came, with his wounded finger, poisoned also by the explosive substance used, and received the wise and patient attention of the helpful Helen, which alone prevented serious results. At last Rollie could play lawn-tennis once more, and then the evidence that he was a pet of his late doctor was observed when it was perceived that he was not allowed to bemoan the fact that his lawn-tennis suit had been soiled, and there was no one handy to cleanse it. Amid the smiles of those beholding how he could govern Helen, who never saw anything amiss in his boyish capers, the long hose and white doublet soon appeared in a spotless condition, and Rollie was himself again. The boy-visitors at 'Sconset are often “in clover.” And for that matter, so are the girl-visitors, for they bathe and swim, talk and walk, play tennis, and wait at the post-office together. 'Scon-

set vacation joys make halcyon days for memory to garner. And health and happiness, with fresh air and good food, and pleasant companionship, are the portion of the youth who are favored to spend the summer weeks where neighborly good-will abounds and 'Sconset laws are obeyed.

One night there was a rush in the little cottage. Two boys rushed in—Two Waltham boys—the dear nephews of the sister-aunties. What a happy greeting! One boy could be called a man; in size and spirit he was a man, and the School of Technology in Boston never had a more worthy student. The other, a boy of fourteen, was stout as a farmer's son might be who did not fail to do his fair share of farm work: and intelligent as a High School boy of great promise must necessarily be. He was another "Rollie"—named for the same dear 'Sconset boy who went in the footsteps of his whalemens ancestors, and alas! returned no more.

Capt. Baxter, the renowned Munchausen of 'Sconset—had brought the boys in his "side-wheel craft" safely, beguiling the tedium of the slow ride in the sea-fog, with his many tales, more or less colored and discolored. Evincing remarkable activity for one of his years—four-score and more—the venerable captain has won many friends, having a kind heart despite his rough-and-ready

speech, and proving a true friend to many in their times of need.

On the next day after their arrival, word came that the surf was very high, and there was a rush for the beach. What mighty waves! How they rolled in, and up around the tent poles and the hammocks! Chairs were hastily carried farther up the beach:—every movable thing was put out of reach of the invading breakers, whose loud roar was appalling to those unused to such watery strife.

Afterwards, in recalling the scene, all agreed that Northrop had most vividly depicted their experience that day in his words:—"you see a wave of unusual magnitude rolling in from far beyond the wild revelry of waters on 'the rips.' It leaps into the arena, as if fresh and eager for the prey, clutches another Bacchanal like itself, and the two towering floods rush swiftly toward the shore. Instinctively you run backward to escape what seems an impending destruction. Very likely a sheet of foam is dashed all around you, shoe-deep, but you are safe—only the foam hisses at you in impotent rage. The sea has its bounds: 'hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther.' Mighty and terrible within its own domain, and beating wildly upon the shore, century after century, it yet obeys the law which is mightier



than it, and abides within its own limits—powerful to destroy, yet obedient to the last.”

It was a grand, yet fearful, sight, to behold those mighty breakers gather strength, as it seemed, rise in a lofty crest, and, bending in a lordly way, pour forth their waters as they dashed upon the shore. Over and over again. There was a fascination in the sight. Each wave was watched to see if it was the superior or inferior of the one which preceded it. And the roar of the tumultuous breakers was itself exciting. One seemed a part of the commotion. Wave against wave far out beyond the breakers, tossing their white crests proudly and defiantly, and at our feet the gathered forces smiting the sandy beach with a roar that drowned the human voice, and a solemn asseveration of power that awed and hushed the beholder.

The shadows of evening were gathering, before the nephews, and those who enjoyed their enthusiasm and shared it, left the beach. And afterward, whenever they talked of it, and of the waves as they appeared next day, all over the wide expanse reaching from 'Sconset Bank to the “Old Man”—a white-capped shoal far off on the Eastern horizon—their sentiments were seen to be identical with Mr. Northrop's, when he said\*—

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\* “'Sconset Cottage Life,” p. 144.

“I think I never saw anything in all my life that impressed me as did this battle of waves and tide on ‘the rips’—not even Niagara. There you comprehend the cause—the fall of water—gravitation. Here it is the mystery of the tide, the dominion of the moon contending with the waves that themselves—the wind meanwhile having already ceased—seem as mysterious. Here is an upheaval, a wild, tumultuous conflict of waters that ought, to all appearances to be as calm and peaceful as a lakelet. There seems, indeed, to be life, will,—and a malignant will,—anger and ferocity, in this desperate struggle, that are demoniac. And it is perhaps this element of the wonderful exhibition of Nature’s forces that makes the scene peculiarly impressive.”

Never, in after life, can those who are reared on the sea-shore forget the impression of wild and stormy grandeur which the surf presents during an on-shore gale, or after a storm at sea.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

## SEA-STORIES.

“I know an isle, clasped in the sea’s strong arms,  
Sport of his rage, and sharer of his dreams;  
A barren spot to alien eyes it seems,  
But for its own it wears unfailing charms.”

EMILY SHAW FORMAN.

**D**O listen to those talkers out there! Their speaking is what you may call *animated!*” exclaimed Helen, and those to whom she spoke looked out of the side window, and saw the aged sea-captain, and some younger men sitting on the little bench by the store, and their faces as well as voices expressed deep interest in the conversation.

“They are telling stories of whaling days, I guess,” said the N. M.

“Telling yarns,” laughingly responded Helen, “and they are like parrots, all talkers but no hearers.”

“Wait a few minutes,” said the invalid. “They will settle down, and you will find that Capt. George

W. Coffin will have the floor. I have observed that his voice out-sounds the rest in the long run, and they like to hear his well-told sea-tales too well not to be silent after awhile."

"His oft-told," said the N. M., "for he has told them for a half-century or more."

"The same ones?" queried Helen, "and without embellishment?"

"Yes, the same, and without parallax. He steers a straight course always!" and the N. M. paused with an expression which said, "Don't you doubt my father's sea-stories, if you do those of every other story-teller!"

Helen and the invalid smiled, and responded to the look with a nod of approval. And then they listened.

The ancient mariner was telling a modern tale whose items had all been rehearsed in the ears of the family and visitors many times. It concerned himself as the keeper of the Life-Boat. *The Life-Boat, par excellence*, for when he first took charge of it there was no Life-Saving Service established on the island, or indeed on the coast of the United States anywhere. A few such boats as the one he cared for, and a few huts known as "Humane houses," because belonging to the Massachusetts Humane Society, were all the evidences afforded, to show that those safe on land were interested to rescue the imperilled toilers of the sea.

The old captain prided himself on taking good care of the boat, and regarded himself as sole custodian of the property which was in his hands. No coaxing could get the keys. If any one wished to see the boat he would go to the boat-house with him. Otherwise no vision. One Sunday morning, a well dressed gentleman came, and desired to see the boat, saying, "Let me have the keys, and I will soon return them." But the sturdy old custodian refused. The visitor urged. It was all in vain. Evidently he thought the old captain was uncivil and disobliging. Baffled and annoyed, the visitor asked why he was so persistent, and indicated that he might at least allow *him* to have the keys. The captain looked out of the door, and saw the elegant carriage and two horses, but he was not awed by equipage or apparel, and finally declared that as there was no wreck, and it was the Sabbath, he was not bound even to show anybody the way to the boat, and he had kept those keys for twenty years or more, and proposed to hold on to them. It was with him duty and conscience, and he wouldn't budge an inch.

"But," said he, when he had given full evidence of his faithful stewardship in the particular of keeping the keys, like a veritable Protestant Saint Peter, "I will go with you, and open the boat-house door myself."

And he enjoyed the change of look that came to his visitor, with a quiet smile. But no persuasion could induce him to ride. He trudged along, after his usual manner, the carriage slowly following, and when the boat had been examined, was surprised to find that this visitor was an official of the Humane Society who had heard of Capt. Coffin's indomitable persistency in keeping the keys, and had that day seen that they could not be obtained by any show of wealth or station, but all favors consistent with his duty would be courteously granted. So the official praised his trustworthiness, and thereafter the faithful custodian delighted to tell the simple story, in his own graphic language, over and over again. And that tale he was shouting forth to his hearers that morning, with all the accompaniments of gesticulation needful, and the "He said," and "says I," that help to make narration impressive.

As the story came to its climax and close, to the evident satisfaction of speaker and listeners, the invalid sagely remarked—"How much of the interest of a story, and of conversation generally, depends upon the picturing of the scene by those little words "He said," and "says I!"

"Even so, my sapient sister!" exclaimed Helen, "a narrative and a recital are always essentially different."

“Well, I must confess I am interested as much in the manner of telling a story as I am in the story itself.”

“So are my father’s hearers,” responded the N. M., “for it is his emphatic use of hands and arms, and voice, that makes them patiently listen to-day to the unimportant stories he is telling. But he has some veritable sea-stories worth telling, and you ought to hear them.”

Helen laughed aloud, and exclaimed, “Do you remember the time we were going to be quiet in your study, and you gave your father some pictures to keep him still and happy, as he rested on the lounge, and you were calmly writing at your study-table?”

“Indeed I do,” answered the N. M., “and how he almost fancied the lounge a whale-boat, and like some old soldier ‘fighting his battles o’er again,’ he appeared to tackle the leviathan, and every picture only increased his ardor, and the force and compass of his voice, and the vigor of motion in arms and tongue, till we gave up the pen and were his audience from the time the whale was sighted, with ‘There she blows!’ till the trying out of the oil began.”

“Why, what caused the commotion?” wonderingly asked the invalid.

“We had handed him a series of engravings repre-

sending the capture of a whale. It proved anything but a sedative for him or us," quickly responded Helen, and she and the N. M. laughed heartily over the well-remembered episode.

A little time after this conversation the captain had opportunity to tell a genuine whale-story, and the invalid had a specimen of what was seen and heard that night in the *unquiet* study, and very much wished she could reproduce it in his own language for her pupils and friends in coming days.

Very tamely it is here re-produced. He said that he was in a boat, rowing after a whale. He was boat-steerer, and the mate was in the bow of the boat. The whale had been struck, and the line had a turn round the loggerhead and was "nippered," while the whale was running on the top of the water. The occupants of the boat thought all the whales of that school were ahead, keeping together like a herd of cows, when lo! a huge whale rose right under them. The concussion sent the boat-steerer, and a youngster, who was aft next the steering oar, some forty or fifty feet into the air, and as the two boats were running nearly side by side, they landed in the other boat, safe from further harm; four of the boat's crew were left in the water, the mate reached for his knife and cut off the line which was fast to the



whale, and then the rest held on to their boat till the captain came with his boat, and took them in, and towed the broken boat back to the ship, which was then about a mile to the leeward. Meanwhile the whales had disappeared.

The tameness of this narration gives but a feeble glimpse of the excitement of such an hour of daring and of danger. But to hear these tales of the whalers from those who were eye-witnesses, and partakers of the heroism and peril, is worth a journey to Nantucket. Only a little while, and the last of the old sea-captains, who followed the ocean monster to his haunts, will be "gathered to his fathers," and there will be no more such wonderful narrations, or such graphic narrators, for the whale and the whaler will both be things of the past.

"Do you wonder," asked the N. M., "that when I was a child I used to sit upon my father's knee, and recite to him the twenty-three stanzas—ninety-two lines—written by Peleg Folger, in which the whale was mentioned?"

"I am not surprised," laughingly answered Helen, "Not a hair rises in amazement."

"Perhaps you will be amused, if not amazed, if I should give you a few stanzas. Listen!"

“Thou did'st, O Lord, create the mighty whale,  
That wondrous monster of a mighty length;  
Vast is the head and body, vast his tail,  
Beyond conception his immeasured strength.

When he the surface of the sea hath broke,  
Arising from the dark abyss below,  
His breath appears a lofty stream of smoke,  
The circling waves like glittering banks of snow.

But, everlasting God, thou dost ordain,  
That we, poor feeble mortals should engage  
(Ourselves, our wives, and children to maintain)  
This dreadful monster with a martial rage.

And though he furiously doth us assail,  
Thou dost preserve us from all dangers free;  
He cuts our boat in pieces with his tail,  
And spills us all at once into the sea.”

As the N. M. paused, Helen suggested that the other nineteen stanzas could be dispensed with, and the N. M. assented with the words: “That’s enough. The author died when my grandmother was seven years old, and I suppose two generations had recited them in their childhood, if not three, before I got hold of them. They are a part of Nantucket’s classics.”

“So are Mrs. Forman’s ‘sonnets,’” said Helen, “and a decided improvement.”

“Perhaps in accordance with the law of evolution,” added the invalid, and the conversation closed, for it was bathing time. The white umbrella with its green lining, was taken out to become “the tent on the beach,” and with a sense of exhilaration in the very thought of the sounding sea, and the sandy beach, and the pleasant fellowship, the trio left the cottage, and hastened down the bank.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## DANGER OFF 'SCONSET.

"But 'Sconset saw a cruel sight:  
The mocking rage of the 'Old Man's' might;  
Stood and beheld within their reach,  
Beyond the surf of the long, Low Beach,  
A sinking vessel—'God pity the men!'  
The terrible shoal devouring them then.  
And many a craft with a tattered sail,  
Went down in the merciless wave and gale;  
And many a man was lost that night,  
With never a star when the sea grew white!"

ARTHUR ELWELL JENKS.

**Y**HERE'S your spy glass, grandfather!" exclaimed Rollie, one morning, just-after breakfast, as he rushed in from the bank, where he and the other boys had been watching the mighty billows as they rolled along, breaking in snowy foam long before they reached the sandy beach.

The old sea-captain turned hastily around, the fire came to his eyes, but instead of telling the wide-awake grandson where the coveted spy-glass was placed, he

asked: "What is there to see? is there a wreck?" For the earnest manner of the active boy betokened something more than usual, and the spy-glass was not to be relinquished to one of the third generation while the old Commissioner of wrecks was able to look after things himself.

The boy had to answer that a fishing smack was amid the wild waters bearing down upon Pochick Rip, and the men, on the bank watching her, were alarmed for her safety.

The old veteran of the seas had been bemoaning his inability to walk far on account of lameness, but "as a man thinketh, so is he," and as he jumped for his pea-jacket and sou-wester, and took the glass under his arm, no one would have thought his feet were weary, or that his limbs were heavy with the weight of four score years. Out he went, into the rain and mist and wild blasts of that August gale—"What was a north-east storm to him if a vessel was in peril?"

The female portion of the household were a little longer in putting on rubbers and waterproofs, etc., and when they reached the street, "grandpa" was out of sight. And actually!—such was the force of mind over matter on such an occasion that before they could reach "the gully" they could see "Father Coffin" returning

with the assurance of safety, given in a stentorian voice, "All ship-shape! They've run under the lea at Tom Nevers!" and, long afterward, was that disturbed household, that sudden departure with the hugged-up spy-glass, that rapid apparelling of the women folks, that hasty return of the sea-king with a shout of victory, mentioned as evidence that the changing of thought gave strength to weakness, and lent wings to feet apparently too lame to walk. No getting cold at such times! No hesitancy through fear, and therefore no physical results such as fearful hesitancy in the path of duty may always be expected to bring.

When all was over, and the women also had returned, there were questionings and answers concerning shipwrecks off 'Sconset, and as the stories of danger and distress were told rapidly, one after the other, by the old sea-captain and some of the neighbors who had dropped in, when the flurry which stirred the heart of Siasconset was all over, and the imperilled craft was anchored safely under the lea, the N. M. declared it was not strange that years ago an island poet had pictured the rugged pathway of the mariners off 'Sconset in a storm, in the words, speaking of the sea-girt island:

“Thy fatal shores, and sandy shoals,  
Round which the foaming white-cap rolls,  
All hopes of safety blast ;  
The pale, affrighted sailor eyes  
The dangers that around him rise,  
And turns away aghast.”

“I can remember,” said the N. M., “when the beach was much narrower than it is now, for I came up here to 'Sconset for a fishing season with my grand-parents, when I was a girl, and we occupied a little cottage in the front row ; and that row is all gone now ; washed away, the bank is, and the houses taken to pieces and moved away, where they were not undermined so they fell. The beach was so short, the waves touched the bank, even when the sea was not in a rage. I was a little school-girl—about ten years old—why its almost fifty years ago !—and as our goods had not arrived, for heavy loads over heavy sands move slowly, I betook me to the only book I could find in the cottage, and I remember that I sat on the table, with my feet in a chair, so that I might see the surf as it rose and broke and rolled up toward the foot of the hill, and read, when I was not watching the waves, and the sea-gulls and the foamy surf.

“And what did you read ? Can you remember that?” asked the invalid.

"Indeed I can remember the small, quarto, leather-covered volume."

"And it was—

"Walker's Dictionary." All burst into a laugh at the mental picture of a little girl reading the dictionary, because there was nothing else to read.

"Just like you!" said Helen with a twinkle in her eye which suggested raillery—"I wonder you didn't write verses, as well as read the dictionary."

"Perhaps I should, if I had been equipped with pencil and paper," was the answer, with a quiet smile. "I signed a receipt once with a nail dipped in ink, when at moving-time the household goods had gone, leaving only the ink-bottle on the mantel. But that was in after years," she added with a sigh, "when I was about to remove from my island home."

"How vivid the remembrances of childhood are!" said the invalid, musingly. "I think I could never forget the storms around Nantucket, if I had seen them with childish eyes, and grieved over them with childhood's heart of timid sympathy!"

"You may be sure children do remember such things," responded the N. M., "for I well remember how I stood up in a chair, and watched a little vessel coming across the rips in a heavy sea, and how my dear, good



stepmother cried and sobbed as she stood near me, and held her breath, at times, as the vessel rose and fell and was sometimes almost out of sight. She had known what it was to have a brother go to sea in a vessel like that, and after one of these storms, another vessel reached the island, and reported the foundering of her brother's craft with all on board. It had been seen laboring amid the surges, and then it sank into the trough of the sea and was lost to view forever. It had sunk to rise no more. Her brother Rowland never reached his home again."

"These narrations make a sea-faring life seem unattractive to me," said the invalid.

"But," said Helen, "I suppose there are those to whom the daring and the danger would really have a charm, or there would be no whalers, no explorers, and commerce would cease between ocean-divided lands."

"We have evidence of that in the past history of this island. Its name has become almost synonymous with bravery in the midst of ocean's perils, and I do believe the old whalers really felt 'at home on the rolling deep,'" was the last word on the subject, spoken by the N. M., who lost no opportunity of sounding the praises of her native island, and its brave and hardy sons and self-reliant daughters.

## CHAPTER XV.

## SYMPATHY.

“Over the road to 'Sconset,  
That dear, old sea-blown place,  
The dreamy fisher-hamlet,  
Where smiles the ocean's face ;  
Over the road to 'Scorset  
I'm riding all alone ;  
And the sunset's sweet reflections;  
Are warmly akin to my own.”

ANNA C. STARBUCK.

**T**HE surf was still high, and ran far up the sandy beach. All night long, its continuous roar had been heard by those who were not lost in slumber, and its monotone mingled with the dreams of those who slept. But, before morning, the roar was louder, for the wind which had lulled, had again arisen, the tide also had attained its majority, so to speak, and every wave seemed a tenth, each was so full and strong and rolled up on the beach so far. It was a grand morning for those who wished to see the ocean in a tumult.

Not now in a rage. Not in a fury yet, as when in winter storms, or mad, October gales, the whole wide expanse was white-capped, turbulent strife, but enough in a commotion to satisfy those who knew little of the phases which old ocean can put on, and who are ready to watch the ceaseless heavings with alternate wonder and awe, mingled at times with a sort of wild delight.

But the sun was peering through the clouds, and they were rolling away. The village was in ecstasies.

The little folks were confident the wind would go down soon, and even if the surf did not subside, so that they could bathe, at least the children could enjoy being on the beach again. And as for the children of a larger growth, they were just as glad to see the sun as the younger people were.

"To see the sun is pleasant," now as in Bible times, and despite the lack of shade trees, 'Sconset folks and their visitors all welcome the sun, trusting to umbrellas and to large hats for escape from browning, and really not caring a copper if they do get "as brown as a berry."

On such a morning as this, George stopped under the window, and called aloud to the people within. "Halloo there! want a ride? Halloo! come out and ride!"

The invitation was soon accepted. No stylish equipage awaited the party, and no affectation of style pre-

vented the ladies from mounting into the wagon, and riding off up to the vegetable garden. It was "out North," George said, and it was worth seeing when it was reached. Such nice beans, and squashes, and green corn! And, on the way, how many wild flowers! It was a rich treat after the storm; and the two sisters did so enjoy the flora of the island!\* And then the ride itself! No formality of dress! No repression of speech or laugh! It was 'Sconset, and the heart of Siasconset was sympathetic with all the phases of feeling which move to smiles or tears: so if one chose to laugh aloud, or sing, or shout merrily, or talk like parrots, there was no infringement of etiquette, and Mrs. Grundy did not elevate her tip-tilted nose and say: "Such people!"

In summer time 'Sconset was hardly to be called a "dreamy fisher-hamlet," for there was little opportunity for dreams, except in the night, or just after dinner. All the same it is a "dear old, sea-blown place," and the fresh, morning air was exhilarating as the visitors to Coffyn Cottage rode up to "the lot," and rode back with the vegetables. That was a ride to be held in memory. That was a morning of joyous sympathies.

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\* Since that memorable summer, a valuable Catalogue of the Plants of Nantucket has been published, prepared by Mrs. Maria L. Owen, of Springfield, Mass., a native of Nantucket, and a descendant of its most honored early settlers. It is extensive and accurate, and invaluable to all who love, or would learn about, the flora of Nantucket.

But not all the mornings were care-free. There was much to be done to make life comfortable. Even in cottages there are beds to make, lamps to trim, dishes to cleanse, and various other domestic duties, attention to which is not to be avoided, and which take time and strength. And one morning there came which was full of sorrowful sympathy.

A brother's wife came in with a sad face. Tears gathered in her eyes. All saw that something had occurred to make the motherly heart very heavy.

"Why, Mary Eliza!" exclaimed Helen, "you look troubled! What's the matter? Anybody sick, at your house?"

"Nobody is sick," was the reply, as the kind-hearted visitor sank wearily into a chair, "but that dear, little baby is dead." And then the tears, which had been welling up from the heart of one who had not forgotten her own blessed infant, long ago gone into the angels' keeping, gathered in the blue eyes and slowly rolled down her cheeks, as she sobbed out, "I kept the baby's milk by itself, and we have been careful, it should have the very best, and when they came up this morning, they said it was no longer needed, for the dear, little baby was dead."

The heart of Siasconset had been full of sympathy in

reference to that sweet babe, which was struggling for life, during the teething period, and would have been victor on 'Sconset bank, if anywhere on earth; but its days were numbered, and after watching and waiting, and as it were the very holding of breath in the village to listen to the plaintive wailing of the feeble infant, the time had come when the mother was to find her arms empty, and the whole of the little community was to be saddened in sympathy with her maternal grief.

"I wanted to send some flowers," continued the kind, motherly sympathiser, "but I had none save large and gay ones. They didn't seem appropriate for that sweet, little babe."

"Oh!" said Helen, always equal to every emergency, "you forgot the lovely, white, wild flowers around us. I'll make you a wreath, if you'll get me some of them."

And sure enough! only a little while, and on a large plate, holding water to keep it fresh, lay a lovely, white and green wreath, prepared by Helen's deft fingers and consummate taste, and Mary Eliza carried the simple offering to the little cottage in White's Hamlet, and left it as a token of the fact that the farmer's wives not only sell milk to their summer customers, but that the hearts of Siasconset people are touched in tender sympathy with all the woes and griefs which may come to

the fellow beings—their brothers and sisters of the Continent—who seek health and recreation on their shores.

From the hour when the sweet baby ceased to suffer, the heart of Siasconset throbbed in sympathy with the bereaved. As previously stated, the old fashion of death, which Dickens mentioned, when Paul Dombey's soul went out with the tide, has long been known in that sea-side village. Thank God, it has also known of that "older fashion—immortality!"

And Helen softly whispered to the N. M. that night, referring to the dear baby-angel, and quoting a poem published in her own compilation,\* and written by a friend of her girlhood:

"High in those eternal archways  
By the white celestials trod,  
Baby's learned the hidden password  
Of the mystic lodge of God."

The precious dust of the little infant was, next morning, borne far away to Detroit, and the heart of Siasconset followed the bereaved parents, on their sorrowful way, with tender sympathy, with prayers and tears.

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\* "Our Home Beyond The Tide," page 226.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## “THE GREAT MARY STARBUCK.”

“God bless the sea-beat island,  
And grant forevermore,  
That charity and freedom dwell  
As now, upon her shore!”

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

**N**EVER since the days of which the Quaker poet sang in his poem of “The Exiles” there has been an atmosphere of freedom and good will upon the island to which Thomas Macy and Edward Starbuck betook themselves, when persecuted for harboring Quakers. And the island, in later years, became the dwelling place of scores of Quakers—nay hundreds, who by “convincement,” or “birthright,” belonged to the peaceful sect. The N. M. seemed to enjoy speaking of this fact, and prided herself on her Quaker ancestry. And she appeared rather to be pleased when she set up patriotism against Quakerism, as she recounted to her patient hearers, again and again, the time when she rose up in a Baptist prayer-meeting in a busy shore-town of Massachusetts—



after some of the best blood of Essex County had been shed for liberty—and declared in rhymes of her own arranging:

“Child of the peaceful sect though I was born,  
Taught the brave warrior and his deeds to scorn,  
Yet, if I must, my birthright I resign,  
And henceforth own my country's cause is mine!”

But, after all, how the N. M. did love to see the simple, but attractive Quaker garb! How she did like to go over to “Cousin Sarah's” and listen to her cheerful “thee” and “thou,” and when “Cousin George” saw fit to hold forth in the school-house, or the hotel parlor, she had gone many a time, not so much to hear him deliver his message, it is true, as to live over again the days of old, when, in the town eight miles away, she had spent many a Sabbath of her childhood listening to the anthem music of Mary (Clisby) Macy, (whose ninety-second year found her still on the island full of faith and hope), and where on rare occasions the Gospel melody of Sybil Jones\* was heard, and the impressible heart of girlhood was stirred to lofty emotion and consecrated purposes!

So when “Hepsibeth” came, with her “companion,”

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\* A renowned Quaker preacher mentioned in Harriet Beecher Stowe's “Sunny Memories of Foreign Lands.”

and other friends, it was with no small delight that the N. M. and many others of the 'Seonset households sat willingly in the waiting silence, and then listened with satisfaction to the words of peace. Even during the week-day hours there were some who felt willing to turn aside for a season of prayer and praise, and solemn communion with each other and with God.

The N. M. was a reverent believer in the call of women to be helpful in the world, as preachers, if they pleased, and in all other ways, and she was never weary of singing the praises of those Nantucket women who in their day and generation had exerted wide influence as preachers or reformers. She did not forget the names of Lucretia Mott, and Eliza Barney, but she went back often to the name of Mary Starbuck, the grandmother, several generations back, of Eliza Barney, and the ancestral relative also of Lucretia Mott:—Lucretia, having been born “Coffin,” and Mary Starbuck being Mary Coffin, the daughter of the first chief magistrate, Tristram Coffin. She enjoyed therefore the perusal of a book published in 1833 and entitled “Female Biography.” On its 463 page was the following sketch of the renowned Mary Starbuck, who was a Quaker preacher, and a sort of Deborah, upon the island, in her day. The author, Samuel L. Knapp, says:

“MARY STARBUCK. If we look at the origin of every country, state, or colony, we shall find that the women had more to do with the foundation of their prosperity than the men; but it has so happened, I will not say by design, but rather by the course of events, that but few of them have been fairly placed on the pages of history. There is a small island within the limits of Massachusetts, known to most of the world from the enterprise and wealth of its inhabitants, whose history is unique—this is the island of Nantucket. In 1659, it was taken possession of by two white men and their families, Thomas Macy and Edward Starbuck. They fled, when the Quakers were persecuted, and settled on this island. They were joined by others who were apprehensive of being involved with Hugh Peters, a preacher of note, who had been prominent in the revolution which brought Charles I. to the scaffold. On the restoration of his son, Charles II., the whole world was searched for those who had been unfriendly to his father. Among these, perhaps, although not of great importance, were those who settled in Nantucket, for while they lived at Salisbury on the Merrimack, they had been intimate friends of Hugh Peters. People in a primitive state always discriminate more accurately than those of a more advanced standing. The aborigines sel-

dom have a coward for their leader. Mary Starbuck, the wife of one of those first settlers of Nantucket, was a woman of superior mind. The influence of that mind commenced when she had but few or no rivals; and for more than half a century, she exercised that control, which great sagacity and sound sense, with virtuous principles, always deserve to have. This people saw their insular situation, and knew that as they increased, the soil could not be depended upon, alone, for subsistence, and they made their harvests on the waves of the ocean, a territory which no agrarian law could reach. Whales were seen dashing near them, and the sight was too tempting for them to refrain from the fishery. They knew nothing of the manner of harpooning them at that time, but by the advice of Mary Starbuck, they sent to Cape Cod for some persons acquainted with the business of catching whales. Interest is always quick-sighted. By the advice of Mary Starbuck, the system which has characterized the whalers of Nantucket from all other co-partners, was established. 'Let each have an interest, and everyone will do his duty,' was her maxim.

More than sixty large ships are now owned in Nantucket, engaged in the whale fishery. The first whaling vessels were small; they went north, then south, and

in process of time swept round Cape Horn, when larger vessels were built; and then they circumnavigated the globe, in the course of their business. These whalers, perhaps, now little think how much they are indebted to Mary Starbuck for the first great principles which now govern these voyages; and but little did Mary Starbuck know of the oceans they were to explore; but such is the power of mind, well directed in the early stages of society. A curious subject of contemplation naturally presents itself, as we see the proud whaling ships, returning from their long voyages, laden with valuable cargoes, and then run back to the origin and progress of this great business, to the time when Mary Starbuck saw her children and kindred set sail for the monsters of the deep, in small boats, and return with success.

If, at Nantucket, you inquire of the first one you meet (and those islanders are an intelligent people) for the monument raised to Mary Starbuck, the answer will be, 'Mary has no monument.' If you ask, 'Well then, where was she buried?' 'Why, I never heard where; but probably on that rising ground, as it is generally understood that it was once used as a burial place, and there is one small grave-stone there which goes to support the tradition.' If Mary Starbuck ever had a monu-

ment, the sands have blown over it, and it cannot be found at this day. Tradition does not assist us to speak precisely of the time of her death, but represents her as living to a good old age."

The N. M., closing the reading, thereupon remarked, that, as Mary Starbuck was a Quaker it is nearly certain that she had no stone at her grave, since Quakers were unwilling so far to conform to worldly customs as to have any sort of a stone, until within the last half century, so that the N. M. cannot even find the place where her own mother rests.

The whaling fleet has all departed; the lucrative business is no more followed from Nantucket, the Quaker burying ground has memorial stones in it, and the women go to Town-Meeting and vote for School Committee, but amid all these changes, the name of Mary Starbuck, *nee* Coffin, is revered, as that of a wise and good woman: a trusted and honored wife, and the mother of the first, white, female child born upon the island, named like herself, MARY STARBUCK.

"Whether these Marys ever went to 'Sconset," was the querying response of the practical, as well as poetical, Helen, which was unanswered, but it was decided that if they did, they had Indians there for company, but no Continental summer visitors; plenty of fish for food,

but no bathing in the surf; the whisperings of lovers, but no base-ball matches; moonlight rambles on the beach, but no ice-cream saloons; plenty of house-work to do, but no lawn-tennis or croquet, and, in fact, that 'Sconset in those days, was not even what Mr. Flagg calls it in his unique volume,\* "a lonesome, little watering place on the extreme, eastern verge of Nantucket, hardly anything more than a fishing village," but was the veritable fishing village itself, and no "watering place" at all.

But the "Siasconset influences," to use Mr. Flagg's term, were there then, no doubt, and, as in later days, the lover of that period could, as he says, appreciate the loved one. Then, as now, "that required no exclusion of other attractions, no Siasconset dullness, no contracted dwellings, no narrow lanes or pathways, no wide sea-view or sky-view; no moon-sheen or star-sheen on the waters at evening; no soft zephyrs coming over the moor-land at morning." Then, as now, perhaps it could be said, as Mr. Flagg says: "Siasconset is not merely ruled by softening influences, shed on it by sky and sea and romantic moor-land, but it is a place well contrived for throwing people together. The streets are narrow, the paths narrow, and the rooms no larger

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\* "Wall Street and the Woods." p. 84.

than closets. Blessed forever be proximity!" And yet, perhaps in Mary Starbuck's time it was only a place of wigwams, or a place to be reached on a walk from Sesachacha—*Quien sabe!* Yet it must always have been a place where the weary head and heart could find rest, leaning close to the loving heart of Nature. The blue skies, the far horizon, the murmuring surf, the sea-gull dipping his wings in the dark waters, the moors with their blossoms, the beach with its shells, the life-giving breezes from the wide ocean, and the peculiar sense of being so far away from the world as to be very near to the Infinite—all these were surely there, for they make 'Sconset, and without them 'Sconset could not be.



## CHAPTER XVII.

## BARNACLES AND BATHERS.

“Almost a thousand years ago  
The Norseman’s venturous keel  
Ploughed from the icy-island bays,  
And found, for woe or weal,  
The land we call our native isle,  
The harbors that we know ;  
They locked upon Nantucket’s shores  
A thousand years ago.”

PHEBE A. HANAFORD.

**L**ET us walk along toward Mr. Flagg’s!” was the suggestive remark of the N. M., with an urging look, and the others, smilingly—went. It was on the edge of the bank to the north, and was reached shortly after passing the Hamlet, known as White’s, because built by the enterprising, Detroit citizen of that uncolored name. There was a time when the Flagg cottage crowned the hill in stately and lonely grandeur. What a queer edifice! some said—for it had a front-room and piazza all in one, and its windows were made for letting in the

summer air, and closing out the winter storms, therefore not large, nor greatly glazed. All alone, out there, the hospitable author and his family dwelt for a decade of summers, more or less—alone as to houses near, not alone as to the society of cultured and even renowned persons. But when the crowds of summer visitors came, and the cottages encroached upon the dignified isolation of the earlier discoverer of 'Sconset attractions—the house began to be forsaken, the owners perched upon a breezy, Connecticut hill-top in a town at once ridge and field—and the Flagg mansion was deserted. But when the N. M. and her party went there, it was inhabited by its cordial and intelligent owners. And how pleasant the talk of old times and of new—of the far away old times when the Norsemen visited the Vinland of their times and the America of ours—and of the still more ancient days when the Parsee worshipper adored the sun beneath the Chaldean skies. Wit and wisdom both governed speech, as the little company sat on the sheltered piazza, and looked far out over the heaving sea. Just in front of them bloomed the yellow cactus—the prickly pear—which had probably been brought thither from Coatue,\* where it is indigenous, and far off upon the sunset-tinted waves could be seen a school

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\* The northern limit of the plant on the Atlantic Coast.—M. L. Owen.

of black-fish disporting themselves, and as they passed the village in their huge gambols, attracting the attention of all. Eyes and spy-glasses were levelled at them, till they rolled and tumbled no more within the line of 'Sconset vision. These great sea-dwellers are often observed near the island when the smaller fishes are congregated there, which become the prey of the black-fish, and form their food. But they are seldom, or never, caught from the shore, at present, however it may have been in the long-ago days of the early whalers.

As the party came down from the North into the village, there were indications of some attraction on the beach. Groups of laughing maidens, the rush of an occasional boy, and even a bevy of the stately matrons, were perceived going down bank. What did it mean? Pretty soon two or three young girls were met, each accompanied by a favorite boy-companion, and one of the sweet-faced misses called out, "Oh, Aunties, aren't you going on the beach to see the moon rise?" It was all accounted for; Emily Ruggles had revealed the secret. The moon-rising was the event. And, on the beach, the people, younger and older, gathered, and the songs of that evening hour were very sweet as the villagers and their visitors waited for the silvery light of the rising moon to shimmer across the broad waters. At last it

came, and the stillness of watchers with it. And then a burst of welcome! And brighter and wider gleamed the silvery pathway from the far horizon to the shore, as the queen of night rose toward the zenith. It was an evening to be remembered. But it was only one of many such in a summer at 'Sconset; beautiful to perceive and enjoy, and fadelessly beautiful in the memory thereof. The clumsy gambolling of the porpoises, the yellow charm of the island cactus, even the pleasant chat of ancient customs and far-off peoples, were forgotten for the while, in the always-to-be-remembered glory of that rising moon. Such pictures stay in the halls of memory, and there are those who watch the seals at San Francisco, and gaze delightedly over Pacific waters, who can close their eyes and see those pictures hanging there forever, which make them long to cross the Rocky Mountains, and reach 'Sconset before moon-rise on a summer evening, that they may live over again the exquisite enjoyment of such a well-remembered time.

Night passed, the moon paled in the light of day, eleven A. M. arrived, and the bathers again assembled on the beach. Then the photographer drew nigh.

"Run, Lillian," exclaimed Helen, "you and your cousin Phebe, run and be taken!"

No sooner said than done. Nimble feet sped over the sands, and now, in many far-scattered homes, is a picture of the bathers, watched by two little girls, in the foreground of the picture, very near the line of the surf—one, gracefully standing, “unworried” (as “Uncle Aldrich” said once) and the other drawing back, as if she feared the undertow would sweep their bare feet off the shining sands. The photograph, became an engraving of goodly size, the large engraving was reduced to a little wood-cut, and in pamphlet and paper the bathers and the two little girls are now immortalized and exhibited, far and near, and all because the quick-witted Helen impatiently shouted “Run, Lillian, run!”

“Did you see Jean on the beach to-day?” asked Helen of the N. M., “when she discovered those barnacles?”

“Not when her eyes first lighted on them, but I heard her exclaim, and rushed to share her ecstasy,” was the answer.

Just then the invalid appeared in the sitting-room, with her hand full of something apparently very precious.

“Helen,” she said, “these are goose-neck barnacles.”

“Well, I’m not such a goosey I don’t know it,” was the quick reply, “I took some off the bottom of a molasses schooner, which had just come from the West Indies,

once, at a Jersey City dock, and I'm not likely to forget how I hunted up the name of the five-shelled animal."

The N. M. smiled, and said Helen's memory was always good—in fact, too good sometimes, when one would like to have her forget events or words.

And then the talk floated away to the great spar or timber, which had been thrown upon the beach at 'Seonset by some final wave, after its long journey over the stormy deep. It was well covered. What a tale it might have told of shipwreck and sorrow if it could only have spoken concerning its ocean wanderings! Far out in tropic seas it may have been wrenched from the ship to which it belonged, and been tossed by the waves in the vicinity of coral islands; or it may have been part of a craft which was wrecked by contact with the tumbling ice-berg, floating from the far North into the very path of our fishermen and steamers. There was no mark upon it, and no voice to tell who felled the forest tree, and shaped the timber for the ocean voyage. Thoughtful men and women gathered the barnacles from it, and talked of its unknown history. And some of them went up the bank to read that poem, sweet and strong in its rare simplicity, written by John W. Chadwick, and called "My Barnacles." And as he depicts the mollusks rejoicing over a little gift, from his hand,

of the briny sea, and reads to men a lesson of helpfulness, he emphasises the lesson of trust in God with his words:

“They take, with thanks, the human help,  
And still with patience wait  
For the vast love to come and fill  
The void it doth create.

So wait our souls on Thee, O God!  
Their longing is from Thee;  
All human help must ever hint  
At Thy sufficiency.

Come as the ocean comes, to give  
Its energy divine;  
Fold us in Thy encircling arms  
And make us wholly Thine.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## SOROSIS AT SIASCONSET.

“And when we’ve clasped the parting hand  
And sailed the foaming sea,  
Our hearts will ever fondly turn,  
Dear, island home, to thee.  
Will homeward fondly turn, dear friends,  
To school days bright and free,  
Our hearts will turn, while life shall burn,  
Dear, island home, to thee.”

MRS. MARIA L. OWEN.

**M**ONTHS passed away. The N. M. and the two sisters finished their vacation season at 'Sconset and took the wagon first, to town, and then the steamer, to the main land. Halcyon hours fly swiftly, and finally vanish as with a flash, but they leave a radiant memory. The heart of Siasconset had been revealed to them all. They had seen the natives of the village and the visitors, in seasons grave and gay, and had learned the acceptable truth that the simplicity of vacation-days at 'Sconset was in sweet accord with the kindness of spirit



which marked personal interest ; and that the villagers rejoiced in each other's joy, and shared in each other's griefs, till it could be said that the heart of Siasconset was thoroughly sympathetic, and the social influence of the little village was of that character which was at once uplifting and inspiring in the direction of kind words and good works. It seemed to be taken for granted, at 'Sconset, that the Apostle's words were true—"God hath made of one blood all nations for to dwell on all the face of the earth,"—and as the solidarity of humanity was apprehended, every thoughtful soul acknowledged—what the unthinking also felt—that those other golden words for social use are true—viz.: "Love is the fulfilling of the law."

With such impressions of the highest social attainment, the N. M. one autumn found herself again at 'Sconset and a guest of the Nantucket Sorosis which had gathered in a cottage full of precious memories ; where many a literary star, and many a widely known philanthropist had spent some restful hours. Hither to visit the owners—Nathaniel and Eliza Barney—had often come their honored kinswoman Lucretia Mott, with her noble husband, James Mott:—all four being pioneers in the philanthropic efforts which finally resulted in freedom for all persons under the American flag.

And hither on that bright, autumnal day, when the N. M. was there, came others who were also pioneers, and younger women who were happy in following in the steps of those who, long ago, led the way in paths of usefulness to paths of fame.

Linda and Sarah (dear names!) were there to represent the venerable mother whose face already wore the ethereal look of one who had done noble work on earth, and was only waiting the summons to the better land. How we longed to have her with us, for the sweet smile which always accompanied the wise words lingered in our memories, and we missed both in that social hour! But the occasion was a memorable one, and a record of it was preserved in the "Nantucket Journal" of October 1, 1885, and shall find further preservation and wider reach, perhaps, by being transferred to these pages, since all the exercises were in harmony with that social, sympathetic spirit which Helen was the first to term "the heart of Siasconset," and which phrase has become the title of this little book. Here is the newspaper report:

"On Monday, September 28, 1885, Sorosis was entertained in a most delightful manner by Mrs. H. B. Sharpe, at the residence of Mrs. Joseph S. Barney at Siasconset. Although the weather was unpropitious yet a goodly number boarded the train at 10 A. M., at the above date,

and the atmosphere soon catching the infection of sunny smiles and happy laughter, dried up its tears, and allowed old Sol to kiss the golden rod that nodded its good-morning to us as we sped on to the popular health-giving resort.

Our vice-president, Mrs. Linda S. Barney, had preceded us, and upon our arrival we found the tables already spread, and only awaiting the delicious viands which Nantucket picnic-baskets are sure to contain. After an hour's pleasant chit-chat we were summoned to dinner, to which ample justice was done. Anyone who has travelled over this well-patronized road knows its wonderful power as an appetizer.

The natural cravings appeased, our worthy president, Miss Anna Gardner, opened the literary budget by the following scholarly address:

“From time immemorial, from the days when the nectarian feasts of the gods were celebrated, to this day at Siasconset, when less ethereal and more substantial food is served, gathering around the festive board, mingling the feast of reason with the flow of the solvent fluid, has been the universal custom of society on occasions like this, (a good custom where *Hygeia* is recognized as the reigning goddess,) an ever recurring sacrament of love and friendship. Brain and heart are reached and

nurtured through the avenues of sense. The Boston craze, the mind cure, is based upon the subtle relations of mind and body. This so-called new theory of therapeutics (old as Methuselah) widely discussed by Kant (?) and other philosophers of the eighteenth century (minus the fraudulent, avaricious side) contains much that is true and beneficial to mankind. It is the 'survival of the fittest' in the doctrines taught by Locke and Bacon as to the identity of mind and matter. Some of us can remember the ferment in intellectual circles caused by such discussions fifty years ago. The physician who is not likewise a metaphysician will be nothing fifty years hence.

I will not detain you from the good things coming, but simply bespeak a pleasant time for all, and say with Shakspeare, 'may good digestion wait on appetite, and health on both.'"

Mrs. Hannah M. Robinson read the following original poem, descriptive of the difficulties attending the finding of the meaning of the word "Sorosis:"

"Sorosis! what is it and where doth it dwell?  
To what kingdom belong? Can any one tell?  
Did it first greet the morn where the stars had their birth?  
Or has it more recently beamed upon earth?  
Does it dwell in the breezes, the perfumes of flowers?  
And sport with the elves through the long, sunny hours?

Is its murmur as soft as the twitter of doves,  
Or the brook's whisper low to the flowers that it loves?  
Does it compass us round 'mid our labors and cares,  
Like the angel of verse entertained unawares?  
Or is it something that's tangible, visible, real,  
Helping ignorance and vice to a higher ideal?  
I have gone back to Noah (Noah Webster, I mean)  
To see if the least ray of light I could glean  
Of the word with a meaning so exceedingly ambiguous.  
Alas, 'twas not there, nor anything contiguous—  
To Worcester and Johnson I vainly appealed  
Their lips, alias leaves, were hermetically sealed.  
Did I give up the quest?—'twould be something uncommon  
For ignorance to win when its foe was a woman.  
For some time I sat in deep meditation,  
As if not alone my fate but that of the nation  
Depended on this problem's rapid solution;  
It was evidently the offspring of some evolution  
Of which I was ignorant—very easy you say,  
For my philosophy, like Horatio's, to be deficient that way;  
But my resolve had been taken and earth, sea, and sky  
Should list to my queries till I gained a reply.  
So forth to the woods I sallied at morn,  
When the black veil of night from our earth had been torn,  
And the birds and the flowers and the insects that creep,  
Were bathing in sunshine—only mortals could sleep;  
There I shouted and shouted, 'Who to ignorance a foe is,  
Come forth and tell me, oh! what is Sorosis?'  
I listened and heard in the trees such a chatter  
Of monkeys, as saying, 'Pray what is the matter?'

Of all our dear Darwinian brothers who have come here to declaim,  
Not one have we heard pronounce that queer name.  
The trees shook their heads and the birds flew away,  
And I not a whit wiser for questioning that day ;  
To the breast of old Ocean I carried my moan,  
But naught could I hear save the deep undertone  
Of that orchestra grand, deep down in the waves,  
Where the mermaids trip light in their own coral caves ;  
Crest-fallen—not vanquished—I stood 'neath the stars,  
With my one single question—commencing with Mars ;  
But he put on his armour as if for a fight,  
And I quickly withdrew, I think wisely, from sight ;  
The Great Bear only growled at being disturbed,  
And in fact the whole heavens seemed greatly perturbed.  
Several stars, I'll not name them, ran off with the dipper,  
And from the course that they took, I fear, for a nipper,  
And who'd blame them if while watching this isle of the sea  
They saw God's image was licensed, and said, " why not we ?"  
So potent is example—'tis a lesson for all,  
That not alone may we rise, nor alone must we fall.  
The moon 'neath a cloud hid her sad, serious face,  
As if she especially felt the disgrace  
Of ignorance in the Queen of Night's brilliant daughter,  
You'd have thought from her countenance she had lost her last  
quarter.  
More in pity than anger my steps homeward turned,  
Each defeat adding fuel to the fire that now burned  
So fierce in my brain, it absorbed my existence  
To such an extent I defied all resistance.

Find the meaning I would, let it cost what it may,  
And I did, patient listener, after many a day;  
The Trades I assailed, hoping there I might find  
Some solution that would serve as panacea to my mind;  
The cobbler couldn't tell me in detail, but as a whole,  
He believed it related to the immortality of the *soul*;  
The farmer declared that he was just *beat*;  
But he'd *turn-up* the earth from one to four feet  
In hopes 'twas a mineral full eighteen *carrots* fine  
Which he'd *cabbage* and *call-it-a-flower* most divine.  
The merchant declared it grew not in the earth,  
But was some article of toilet imported from Worth.  
Which idea the dressmaker *flounced* as absurd,  
I saw her opinion was *biased*, and referred  
To the tailor at once—he declared it not *suit-ed*  
To his style of thought; he panted for knowledge  
And would give it some heed, but since he left college  
He'd done little else than grow out of knowledge,  
But added with zeal “I really *throw, sir*,  
We shall very soon know more than what we do now, sir.”  
The M. D., so versed in pills and in blisters,  
Said he'd heard 'twas a club they called “Sorry Sisters.”  
(How changed his opinion if he were but able,  
To glance at the faces convened round this table.)  
But his idea of a club, perhaps he was right,  
And though it took me all summer, on this line I would fight.  
Be patient, dear listener, my tale is soon done.  
I'll not recount battles lost, or name victories won  
Time passed, and once more my feet trod the soil  
Of my own native isle, whose air is like oil

On the tempest-tost waves to the thousands who seek  
Repose for the weary, and rest for the weak ;  
'Mong others an infant was brought to our shores  
By its god-mother Morse (all know her of course)  
It was sent by its mother for our island's adoption  
Far away from the din of the city's corruption,  
Its features were winsome, and we could do no other  
Than give it a welcome, we so loved its god-mother.  
I asked, "What's your name? Pray tell, if you know, sis."  
Imagine my surprise when she answered "Sorosis!"  
And this is our club which we tenderly nurse,  
About which we write doggerel (it can't be called verse.)  
For this hour's amusement ; judge not of our aim,  
Or think this the style in which we usually declaim.  
In more serious moments we sing a new song  
Of justice and right, 'gainst injustice and wrong.  
Our heart's aspirations ascend to the True,  
We discard old ideas and welcome the new ;  
We claim close relation to all that is human,  
And inscribe on our banner—"The Elevation of Woman!"

Miss Mabel Sharpe, read, with much effect, a sweet, little song called "The Golden Rod."

Mrs. Charlotte A. Joy Mann read, in her usual clear and distinct voice, so pleasant to the ear, an article entitled "The Shadow of the Harem," by T. W. Higginson.

Mrs. H. B. Sharpe read Victor Hugo's "Credo," to the gratification of all present.



Mr. S. H. Mann read a brief article by James Parton.

The President gave the following original article as a sort of supplement to "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage," the Childe terminating his pilgrimage at 'Sconset:

Stretching afar along the shelving bank,

Behold a village by the sounding sea—

Dwellings in groups, or standing rank on rank,

A novel aspect to the stranger's ee.

The marvel grows, and gazing wonderingly,

Childe Harold views the antiquated sights,

The unique signs on cottage, fence and tree,

From White's trim hamlet, on to Sunset Heights.

What flaunting image now upon his vision lights,

While treading narrow lanes by dwellings quaint?

A fancy figure tall, Dame Gossip said,

A certain skipper, brave, (though not a saint)

Modelled this form from one he'd fain have wed,

When, in his youth a seaman's life he led;

And many other views the Childe could see,

And annals hear, on which his fancy fed,

Of whilom 'Sconset manners, easy, free—

Then idly gazing, lo, what queerity!

The sign "Utopia!" Fabled land of rest!

The Childe had travelled many a weary year

And little thought that island of the blest

In this forsaken region would appear,

Bringing his journey to an end so near.

What is that central figure, old and gray ?

The village pump! you read its title clear,  
Hence to that trysting place he wends his way  
To quench his ardent thirst—his curiosity.

Shades of the past! Fain would he something learn

Of this strange people, this sequestered place.  
To the Post-office then his footsteps turn—  
Some wight may there instruct him how to trace  
Through gnarled roots this simple-hearted race,  
Deeming what men call *progress* simply *loss*,  
For ancient landmarks they would ne'er efface.  
Rushing and snorting comes the iron horse,  
An innovation strange which they do not endorse.

Back to the Beacon-light he bends his way,

The fame whereof had reached him long before,  
He wanders on the heights of Sankoty,  
And listens to the ocean's wildest roar,  
Whose billows chafe and foam along the shore  
Then turns to gaze upon a landscape rare,  
Calming his being to its inmost care—  
On undulating hills and vales, that wear  
Robes of the deepest green, bedecked with flowers fair.

Wide spreads the prospect on to Pocomo,

And to Saul's Hills that glimmer in the light,  
With evening sunbeams they are all aglow—  
Where could a fairer prospect meet the sight,  
Or charm the spirit of an anchorite?

One with the soul of Nature—blending free,  
Inspired and lifted by its subtle might,  
Childe Harold drew from halls of memory  
An innovation sweet—his own apostrophe.

“Dear Nature is the kindest mother still,  
Though always changing in her aspect mild;  
From her bare bosom let me take my fill,  
Her never weaned, though not her favored, child.  
Oh! she is fairest in her features wild,  
Where nothing polished dares pollute her path;  
To me, by day or night, she ever smiled,  
Though I have marked her when no other hath,  
And sought her more and more, and loved her best in wrath.”

To 'Sconset back he slowly wends his way,  
As lengthening shadows show the day's decline,  
The village people, whether grave or gay  
Again to meet, and never to resign  
The new found life from which to press the wine  
Of sweet content—of cheerfulness and joy,  
Nor ever for the world beyond to pine—  
Quaffing the cup which does not swiftly cloy,  
Where happiness is found without its deep alloy.

With a view of calling out Rev. P. A. Hanaford, Mrs. Sarah S. Swain read a poem by that lady, entitled “The Right Marching On.”

THE RIGHT MARCHING ON.

---

Our hearts are weary, waiting for the coming of the day,  
When the barriers of progress are forever moved away ;  
When the women, as the men, shall the ballot-scepter sway,  
And Right go marching on.

In the front of every battle still we see the holy souls,  
Whom the law of righteous freedom, only, evermore controls,  
And whose women, as whose men, should be equal at the polls,  
That Right go marching on.

Our eyes are lifted upward to the chariots of fire,  
That are bearing from among us, to the blessed angel-choir,  
Some whose gospel song of freedom soundeth clearer now and  
higher,  
As Right goes marching on.

We miss them in the forum, and we miss them in the field—  
Souls of strength and grace and wisdom that to Wrong could never  
yield,  
In whose lives the life of heaven is forever more revealed,  
As Right goes marching on.

In their footsteps we move onward to the glory of the height,  
Where they wait the victor-anthems telling triumphs of the Right,  
With a vision cleared of error in the day that has no night,  
While Right goes marching on.

In the conflict weary not, then, for the victory is ours ;  
For the bow of promise shineth after all the vanished showers,  
And the fruit is folded surely in the petals of the flowers,  
As Right goes marching on.

Mrs. Hanaford responded promptly, and concluded her remarks by the following original article:

### SOROSIS AT SIASCONSET.

---

We gather in gladness, we gather in hope,  
For the dawn hath appeared, and the day;  
No longer in darkness the spirit may grope,  
But we walk in the Truth's divine ray.

We have learned that the path of the just groweth bright,  
And that justice means freedom and peace,  
That from man unto man, and to woman each right  
Must be given ere darkness will cease.

Yes, the day-star has paled with the glory of morn,  
The bright beams of the day-god appear,  
And the flag which some high souls so bravely have borne  
Tells the eagles of victory near.

Now woman and man, side by side, may engage  
In the help of world and its toil,  
And the strife which for equal rights ever is waged  
Finds an end on American soil.

Sorosis gives welcome to Truth and to Right  
Where 'Sconset laws must be obeyed,  
And the faces of friends are as gleamings of light  
From the land where no blossom shall fade.

From Sorosis the mother, to this island child  
Comes greeting your course to approve ;  
May the years, as they go and come, find undefiled  
The fame of this child of our love.

Success to the efforts which still may be made,  
In the line of advancement by you !  
Success to the banner you're bearing aloft !  
Success to the brave and the true !

Rev. Louise S. Baker was then called, and in the course of her pertinent remarks made a very happy allusion to the sentiment expressed in the stanzas of the "Golden Rod."

Mrs. Elizabeth Starbuck contributed the following brief, original poem, as a "Summer Farewell," and, later, addressed toasts to most of those present, which from their local and personal significance were highly enjoyed by the recipients.

#### SUMMER FAREWELL.

---

We gather to-day when the rich glow of sunset  
Illumines our path with its halo of light ;  
When the sighing of winds, and the moaning of ocean,  
Combine in their echoes the voices of night.

In splendor and glory, with magical fleetness,  
The summer has come, and the summer has gone,  
Like the glance of a sunbeam in beauty and sweetness,  
That peers through the clouds, and then passes on.

The day's programme came to a happy termination by the singing of the following, written by Mrs. Sarah B. Willetts for the occasion.

Come let us join our voices  
In song before we go ;  
Old Ocean's waves will catch the strain,  
And bear it as they flow.  
And when we meet in other years,  
And other pleasures know,  
We'll sing the praise of 'Sconset days—  
Of 'Sconset long ago.

## CHORUS.

Of 'Sconset long ago we'll sing—  
Of 'Sconset long ago.  
We'll sing the praise of 'Sconset days—  
Of 'Sconset long ago.

Where on this bank in days of yore  
The red man drew his bow,  
We gather round this social board,  
Cheered by wit's brightest flow,  
And when with reminiscences  
Our hearts are all aglow,  
We'll sing, with praise, of 'Sconset days—  
Of 'Sconset long ago.

## CHORUS.

Had this been Adam's Paradise  
Six thousand years ago,  
No tempter would have entered in  
To fill this world with woe.  
Eve would have sung her vesper hymn  
In cadence sweet and low,  
As we sing now of 'Sconset days,  
Of 'Sconset long ago.

## CHORUS.

Now on the threshold of the night,  
Sol, lingering, bids us go,  
And leave this home for water sprites  
And mermaids from below,  
But let no dulling touch of time,  
When wandering to and fro,  
Banish the thought of 'Sconset days—  
Of 'Sconset long ago.

## CHORUS.

Thus endeth the newspaper report.

---

And when the pleasant hours came to an end, the N. M. went back to Coffyn Cottage, bade farewell to the dear ones there, and rode to Nantucket town over the flowery plain, as driver for the President of the Nantucket Sorosis, and her sister Sarah, worthy daugh-



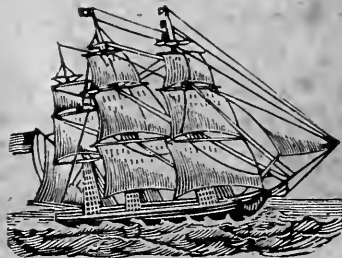
ters of two of the truest abolitionists that ever sighed over the lot of the slave, or toiled for the freedom of humanity.

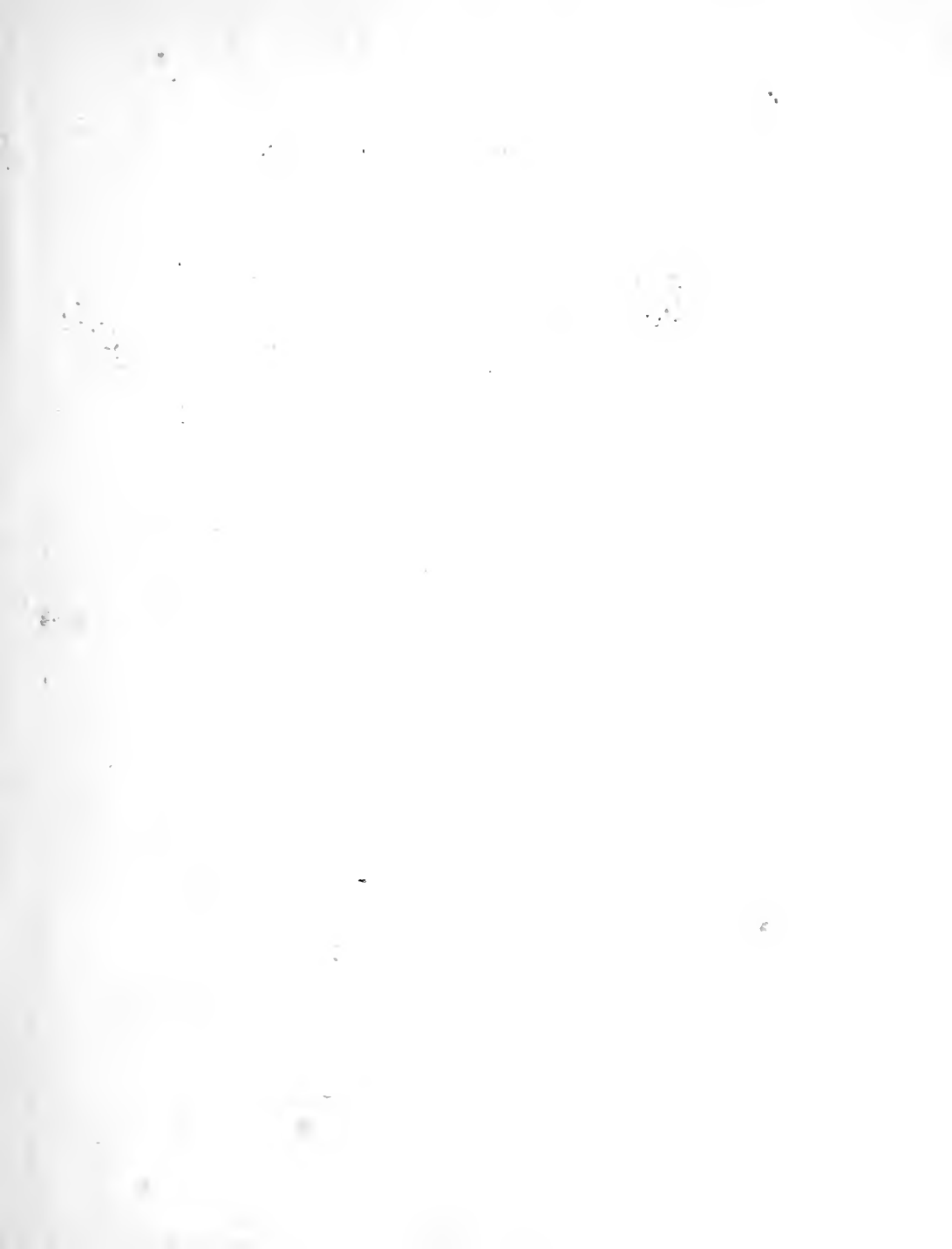
Nantucket has had many pioneers among its natives. The first who protested against "the oppressed Africans, in New England," was Elihu Coleman, a Quaker minister, whose book was written a hundred years before the N. M. was born, and he was an ancestor, or ancestral relative, of Prof. Maria Mitchell, LL.D., the first woman in America to engage in astronomical pursuits, and win merited distinction. Nantucket has also had many authors, both in prose and verse, among its natives, whose books have had extended circulation, and salutary influence. And, in connection with useful and wonderful inventions, scientific and geographical discoveries, and with important mercantile enterprises, the names of her children and grandchildren will be found; to an extent surprising to all those who are unacquainted with her unique people and remarkable history. Space fails the author here to tell of those who, in science, art, literature, commerce, patriotism, philanthropy, theology and reform, have themselves occupied distinguished positions, and opened doors of opportunity to others. Some future day may see that pleasant task accomplished.

Suffice it, now, to add the earnest desire that the fame

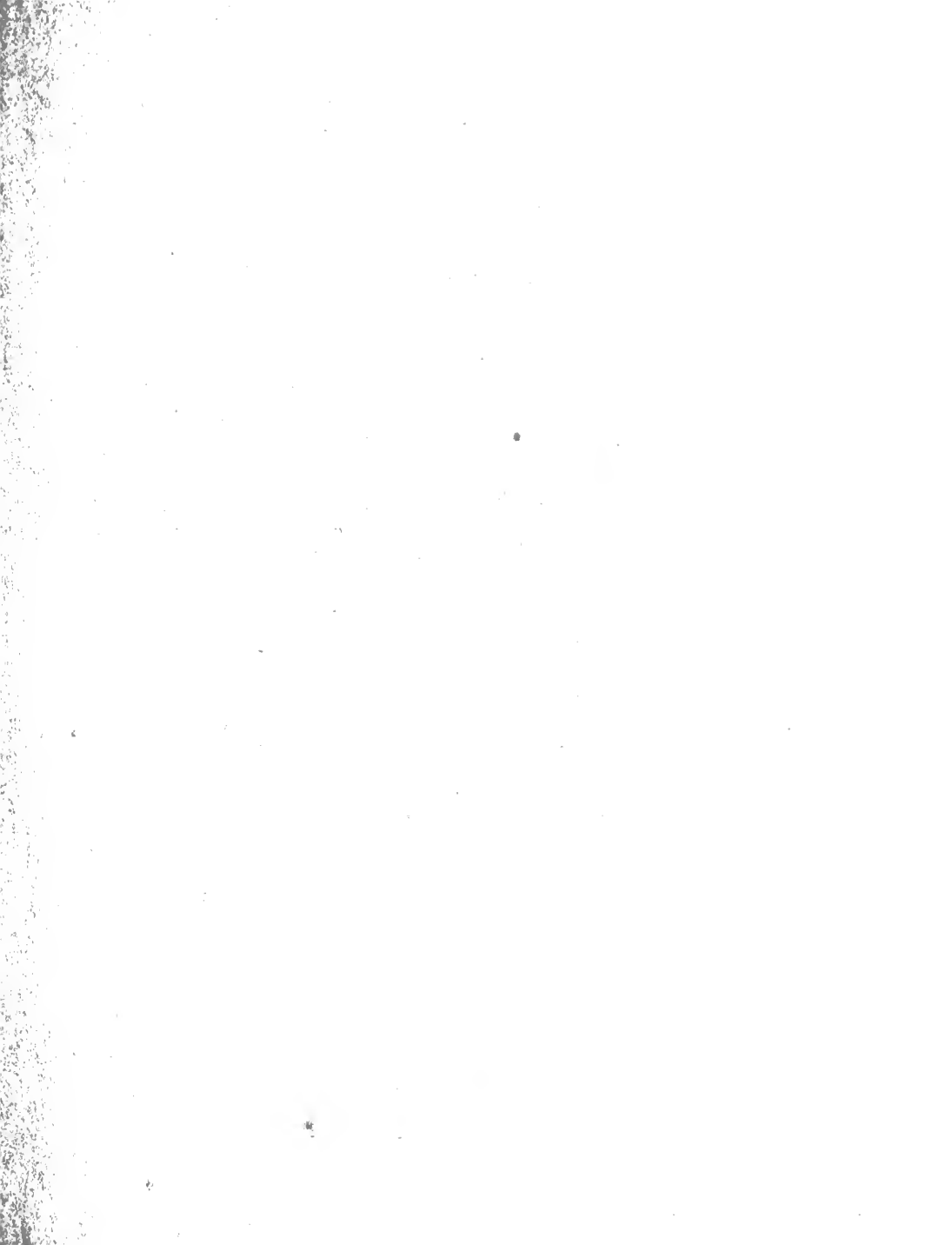
of Nantucket may never grow less, through any failure on the part of its inhabitants to imitate the virtues of the early settlers, or any lack of opportunity to display to visitors from the world over the blue waters, the genuine hospitality, the kindly sympathy, the intelligent good will, which have combined to constitute

THE HEART OF SIASCONSET.





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